



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



32101 065974535



5862

476

Library of



Princeton University.

Bequest of
Laurence H. Bower
1866

Laurance F. Bowen
New York
26 Sept. 1896.

A



**SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR EVERY
DAY IN THE YEAR.**

IN TWO VOLUMES.



**SHORT MEDITATIONS
FOR EVERY DAY IN
THE YEAR.**

EDITED BY THE LATE VERY REV.

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D. D.

DEAN OF CHICHESTER.

VOL. II.

TRINITY.



NEW EDITION.

**LONDON :
GEORGE BELL AND SONS, YORK STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.**

1890. Digitized by Google

Y T I E S V I N U

Y S A S S U

U N D E R

CHISWICK PRESS.—C. WHITTINGHAM AND CO.,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

INDEX TO SAINTS' DAYS

IN VOL. II.

	PAGE
T HE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIR-	
GIN MARY	41
ST. MARK	43
ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES	45
ST. BARNABAS THE APOSTLE	46
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST	207
ST. PETER	270
ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE	273
ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE	275
ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE	467
ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.	470
ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST	472
ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE	475
ALL SAINTS	477

DEC 10 1914 322251

536?
176
12 (RECAP)
Digitized by Google



SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR EVERY
DAY IN THE YEAR.

The Ascension Day.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory: even the Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

Psalm xxiv. 9, 10.

IVE, glorious Jesus, and reign for ever eternal King of heaven and earth! May all the blessed above perpetually adore Thee, and all Thy servants here continually praise Thee; and every tongue confess that Thou, O Lord, art most high in the glory of God the Father: Thou wert obedient to death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God hath exalted Thee, and given Thee a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things on earth, and things under the earth. Allelujah.

Our dearest Lord has now sojourned forty days on earth; His work is complete; and He is to re-
L II.

B

turn to the bright and glorious heaven, which He left to accomplish that which He has so triumphantly performed.

The Lord is again with those chosen disciples of whose faith and love, from the various tests and trials they had undergone, He is quite assured. He has finished admonishing them, and behold He leads them forth; the very road which they once traversed to witness the depth of His humiliation, they now again pursue, to see the height of His glory; through the gate, over the brook, up the steep sides of Olivet, they proceed! O what a well-known way! how familiar is the very sound to my ears! He leads them forward to Bethany, and when they arrive at the same well-known spot, He turns, He lifts His blessed, wounded hands in the act of conferring His benediction. Behold Him, my soul, He loves them unto the end! His arms are spread, and it seems as if, during the act of that solemn benediction, the human will, which fastened His feet to earth, having done its work, is dissolved, and a Divine Will operating from heaven drew Him up; gradually He was parted from His loving, adoring followers; and a cloud, it might be a legion of mighty angels, removed Him from their sight! His loving providence sends two angels to comfort the bereaved brethren, and to assure them that as they had seen their Lord ascend, so would He one day again in like manner descend to earth.

They then fell down and adored their ascended Lord, bending over and kissing the spot on which so lately His feet had rested; and returned to Jerusalem with joy, for they knew that the God Whom they worshipped was in very truth the Lord, the King of glory. O dearest Lord, Thou art gone from us, Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led

captivity captive; the everlasting doors have been rolled back, and the brilliant train of countless angels, the mighty cherubim, and the six-winged seraphim went forth to meet Thee and welcome Thee back to Thy own heavenly abode. They met Thee in mid air, and they chaunted as they went, "Who is the King of glory? the Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory."

Welcome, bright King, into Thy heavenly mansions: welcome, Thou great Conqueror over sin, and hell, and death: welcome, Thou great King over all the earth!

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

And wilt Thou return in like manner, O my Saviour? Yea, so it is written. Thou didst ascend in private and in quiet, in Thy own meek and gentle humanity; Thou wilt descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God; Thou wilt descend in terrible majesty as the avenging Judge! I therefore pray Thee help Thy servant whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy most precious blood. O Thou that art the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, give unto me, who am athirst for Thee, to drink of the fountain of the water of life freely. Grant that I may overcome in this my warfare, and be Thou to me a God, and I will be Thy son. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! *Amen.*

Friday after Ascension Day.

Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle: or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?—Psalm xv. 1.

THOU art ascended, our glorious Redeemer, to prepare a place for us, yet continuest still here our gracious Immanuel to prepare us for it. Thy delight, O Lord, is to be with the children of men; O make it ours to be with the God of heaven!

To Thee, O blessed Lord, do the pure and lowly in heart, to Thee the souls of the righteous, to Thee the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, sing hymns of joy perpetually; fall down before Thy throne, cast their crowns at Thy feet, and, with profound reverence, adore the brightness of Thy majesty. Not only these, but man—a chief part of creation, since formed in His image, and placed chief in honour of all things here below—he joins in praises also, though not able to discharge the exalted duty with the same noble and elevated zeal as the bright hosts of heaven. Even I, the last and least of men, laden with sin and frailty, do yet desire to magnify Thee worthily, and love Thee perfectly. Help me, my God, my life, my strength; assist my desires, and make me capable of glorifying Thee; shed abroad Thy light in my heart; put Thy word in my mouth, that my heart may be filled with Thy praise, and my tongue may sing of Thy glory and honour all the day long.

But because praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner, and I, alas! am one of unclean lips; purge me, I beseech Thee, from all manner of impurity; touch my heart and my tongue with a coal

from Thine altar; wash me, purify me; so shall I be fit to offer Thee the sacrifice of praise.

O eternal Truth, my only stay and hope, my soul panteth after Thee day and night; on Thee all my hopes are fixed. He that knows Thee, knows truth and eternity; for Thou art seated on high above all, Whom, when this life of dimness is dispersed, and the veil of mortal flesh drawn aside, we shall see as Thou art. O Thou, Who art seated on high at the right hand of the Father, draw me after Thee; Thou art my only hope, the only true object of my love; O take my heart and mind unto Thee in Thy glorious place in heaven, and there let them be ever with Thee. Enable me, by the powerful influence of Thy blessed Spirit, to continue steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity; that so, by a true faith bringing forth fruits of good works, Thy mercy may at last bring me to the attainment of everlasting salvation; that I may be where Thou art, and see Thee as Thou art, and adore the brightness of Thy majesty, and join my heart and voice with those whom Thou hast already admitted to that glorious sight, in hymns of joy and praise, saying with all the company of heaven, Glory to the Father, Whose wisdom created us; Glory to the Son, Whose love redeemed us; Glory to the Holy Spirit, Whose graces sanctified us; Glory to the Almighty and undivided Trinity, Whose works are inseparable, and dominion without end. To Thee belong praise, and thanksgiving, and honour, and blessing; and therefore all honour, and power, and thanks, and praise, be unto Thee our God, for ever and ever.

Saturday after Ascension Day.

Like as the hart desireth the water brooks: so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.—Psalm xlii. 1.

THOU art ascended, our glorious Redeemer, to prepare a place for us, yet continuest still here, our gracious Immanuel, to prepare us for it. Thy delight, O Lord, is to be with the children of men; O make it ours to be with the God of heaven!

Our Lord is ascended; no longer is He upon earth. Go up, my soul, and endeavour by thy earnest meditations, to place thyself with Him, although the body must still remain below.

O fountain of living water, when shall I approach Thee, when shall I have travelled through this dry and desolate wilderness, in which there is no way, that my soul may be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy mercy? Behold, O Lord, I thirst; Thou art the well of life; O quench Thou my thirst; yea, after the living God do I thirst; O suffer me to drink of Thy pleasures, and hasten that day of praise and thanksgiving, that day which Thou, O Lord, hast made, that Thy servants may rejoice and be glad in it. O glorious day! O everlasting morning! whose sun never declines, in which I shall hear that most transporting sentence, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," into that joy, where are things great and unsearchable, yea, marvellous things without number. A joy without conclusion, without interruption, without alloy, where we shall meet with all we can wish, and rest secure from all we fear, free from the enemy's assaults, from the tempter's seducing insinuations; full of security,

rest, and peace; blessed with the ravishing vision of God: such is the joy of thy Lord, thy God!

How long, O Lord, wilt Thou say, Wait, wait patiently? O Lord, what do I wish, what do I wait for? Surely it is for Thee, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto His glorious body. Come quickly, Lord, and do not tarry; come, Lord Jesus, and visit us in peace and favour; come and unlock our prison doors, that Thy released may rejoice before Thee with a perfect heart.

But the more I reflect upon and admire the happiness of those who are exalted to this secure and happy state already, the more cause have I to bewail my own misery, who am still exposed to the storms of a tempestuous and troubled sea; for, alas! I can only hope the best, and can be in no way secure of attaining the port of life and salvation. But oh! Thou stay of my soul, my refuge and strength, steer, I beseech Thee, this floating vessel with the helm of Thy cross, lest the deep swallow me up. I am of Thy redeemed, and as such I cry unto Thee. Hear me, O God of my salvation, Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea; Thou standest upon the shore and seest my dangers; O save me, for Thy Name's sake, and so direct my course that I may escape the perils that beset me on every side. Save, Master, or we perish! Such is our state in this life; but Thou bringest us to the haven where we would be, and then we are safe from all harm; there Thou art, O Lord, the true and only light, in whose light we shall see light. To see Thy face, O my Lord, is to know the power, the wisdom, the clemency of God the holy, blessed and glorious Trinity. To see Thee,

the living God, is the most exalted happiness, the honour and reward of blessed spirits; the crown of glory and eternal bliss, the beauty of peace, the paradise of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and that fulness of joy, which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into man's heart to conceive.



Sunday after Ascension Day.

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians, iii. 20.



GOD the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen.

O heavenly Jerusalem! our common Mother, the Holy City of God, my soul longs for thee, and all my faculties are stretched to comprehend thy delights. O what graces, what glory, what noble state appears in every part of thee! Most exquisite is thy form, and thou alone art beauty without blemish. Rejoice, and dance for joy, O daughter of Zion, for thy King Himself, fairer than all the sons of men, hath pleasure in thy beauty. How happy wilt thou be, O my soul, when thou art admitted to see the

glory and the beauty of this fair place! to view the gates, and the walls, the streets, the stately buildings, the splendour of its inhabitants, and the triumphant pomp of its King enthroned in the midst of it. Its walls are of precious stones, and its gates of pearls; the streets are of pure gold, continually resounding with loud hallelujahs. Its houses are founded upon hewn square stones carried up with sapphire, covered in with gold; no unclean person can enter therein, no pollution may abide within its borders. Sweet and charming are thy delights, O Holy Mother of us all! Subject to none of those vicissitudes and interruptions which abate our pleasure here below. No successions of night and day, no intervals of darkness, no difference of seasons in their different courses.

Nor is the light derived from artificial helps or natural luminaries, such as ours. No lamps or candles, no sun, or moon, or stars; but God of God, and Light of Light, even the Sun of Righteousness shines in thee, and the white immaculate Lamb, He it is that enlightens thee with the full lustre of His majesty and glory. Thy light and glory, and all thine happiness is the incessant contemplation of this divine King; for this King of kings is in the midst of thee, and all His host ministering round about Him continually.

There are the choir of angels, there the sweet fellowship and company of the heavenly inhabitants; there the joyful company of those sainted souls who, from their trials and travels through the vale of tears, at last return victorious to their native country. There the goodly fellowship of Prophets, whose eyes God opened to behold far distant mysteries. There are the twelve leaders of the Christian army, the Holy Apostles; there, the noble army of

martyrs, the confessors; there that blessed array of pure and undefiled souls, singing that holy song which none but themselves can learn, and who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These all rejoice in their proper mansions; and though each differ from other in degrees of glory, yet all agree in bliss and joy diffused to all in common, and the happiness of every one is esteemed each man's own. For these, charity reigns in perfection, because God is all in all; Whom all continually beholding, admire and praise and love, without intermission and without end.

O how happy shall I be if, when this body crumbles into dust, I shall be entertained with that celestial harmony, and hear the hymns of praise which legions of angels and saints innumerable are ever singing in full concert. How happy if I may with them raise my feeble voice, and pay the same tribute to my God and Saviour, the Author and Captain of my salvation; to behold His face in glory, and to be made a partaker of those gracious promises of which He hath given me the comfortable hope, by saying to His Father, "I will that they whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may see the glory I had with Thee before the world was." And again, supporting His disciples against the tribulations they should meet here below: "If any man serve Me let him follow Me, that where I am, there also shall My servant be."



Monday after Ascension Day.

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Psalm ciii. 1.



GOD the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen.

When I think of my Lord and Saviour, sitting at the right hand of the Father, in the glory and surpassing majesty of heaven; and when I think of His having condescended to visit us on earth, in order to redeem us from the dominion of sin and the curse of the law, I am utterly confounded to think of the disproportion between His merits and mercy, and my deserts. O gracious Lord, how does my heart burn within me when I think of Thy love towards man! to think of Thy condition upon earth, of Thy glory in heaven! Here Thou wert poor, and had not where to lay Thy head; Thou wert despised, and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; Thou wert often in hunger and thirst, in painful and long journeys; Thou wert abused and insulted, Thy back torn with scourges, Thy face defiled with spitting, Thy ears pierced with slanders and revilings; Thou

didst suffer the death of a malefactor, and then called, "that deceiver!" In heaven, how altered is the picture! O Thy condescension! Thy love! Thy meekness! Thou art seated at the right hand of God, in the place of highest honour in heaven; mighty cherubim and seraphim attend upon Thy state; holy and beautiful creatures are occupied in incessant adoration of Thy divine perfections; and Thou art Thyself the fountain and effulgence of light and life!

O let us magnify that great God Whom angels praise, Whom dominions adore, Whom powers fall down and tremble before, Whose excellent glory cherubim and seraphim proclaim in loud incessant voices. Let us bear a part in this heavenly song, and, together with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, laud and magnify that glorious Name; let us raise our voices with theirs; and though we cannot reach the excellence of their melody, yet will we exert our utmost skill and power in this tribute to our Lord, and say with them, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.

These happy spirits, who offer the sacrifice of pure praise before the throne of God continually, who are ever rapt in the contemplation of His perfections, see them not like us, "through a glass darkly," but "face to face." What tongue can express, what thought conceive, the admirable beauty, the exact order, the numberless multitude of the heavenly host? the inexhaustible joy springing from the beatific vision, the fervent love which ministers delight; the blessedness which comes down to them by their inseparable union to the fountain of all bliss; the light communicated to

them from the source of light ; the happy change into an immutable nature by seeing the immutable God as He is, and being transformed into the likeness of Him they see? O Lord, I am indeed a man of unclean lips ; I cannot touch such high and holy subjects without seeming to defile them by the unfitness of my words ! O Thou, Who dwellest for ever in heaven, grant to me such perseverance, such unalterable desire of attaining to Thy heavenly kingdom, that living here, with heart and mind fixed on things above, I may finally rise with Thee, and rest with Thee, and enjoy Thee, and see Thee as Thou art there, where Thou now sittest interceding for Thy poor weak creatures.



Tuesday after Ascension Day.

But the end of all things is at hand. be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.—I Peter, iv. 7.



GOD the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven ; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless ; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen.

I have now considered and celebrated the festival of our Lord's ascension ; I have meditated on the happiness of heaven, and on the joys he is preparing for those who love Him. I must now join

another consideration to my meditations on my Lord, that of the coming of the Holy Ghost.

Our Lord is in Heaven ; He sends gifts unto men, even the gifts and graces of His Holy Spirit ; I am on earth, and I must dispose myself to the due preparation for receiving these precious gifts. The end of all things is at hand. How truly may I say this, when every day shews the uncertainty of human life ! The person who was yesterday in health and spirits, pursuing his vocation, is to-day struggling with death ; to-morrow, the end of all things will have to come upon him. I am in health now, it is true, but why am I spared ? why should I not be among those who perish in the casualties which daily occur ? why does the arrow which flieth by day, and the pestilence which destroyeth in the noon-day, spare me ? Even if I live to three score years and ten, it will seem but a very short time ; and then, the end of all things is at hand. Be sober then, O my soul ; keep thyself in that quiet, subdued, recollected, watchful state, which is especially designated as "sobriety." The gifts of the spirit are not bestowed upon giddy votaries of pleasure, who seek amusement as their only good ; but they are sent to those who keep their bodies in sanctification and honour, fit temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in. Thou must, therefore, pray much, pray earnestly ; thou must watch unto prayer, and make every action, every thought, every event, the subject of direct prayer to Almighty God. Thou hast a friend in heaven, thy dearest Lord, Who will cause that thy prayers be heard ; watch, therefore, and though thou must not be rash with thy mouth, yet pour out thy heart to thy Father Which is in heaven, with reverent fervour, and in perfect faith, that thou wilt have a favourable hearing. But for


the subject of these thy supplications, thou must indeed watch ; for thou must not utter before God what is not the direct act of thy will, and the conviction of thy mind. Thou must sift thy feelings ; watch over thy mind, and keep it as a well ordered store-house ; and then thou mayest produce before thy God those matters which import thee most to lay before Him.

Thou, O most gracious, most loving Father, wilt accept what I offer Thee, according to what I have ; Thou seest my heart, O Lord, and canst discern whatever there is either faulty or in accordance with Thy will. I beseech Thy goodness to help my weak endeavours at rooting out all evil, and implanting Thy graces ; I am unable of myself, but be with me, Lord ; send me help from above, and strengthen me out of Zion. *Amen.*



Wednesday after Ascension Day.

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves.—1 Peter, iv. 8.

 GOD the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven ; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless ; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Let me consider that the more pure and fervent charity is, the nearer it approaches to the divine

nature. In God, in Christ, and in the Holy Ghost, there resides the most pure, fervent, fruitful, and transcendent love; and to verify this statement I have only to consider, for a few moments, all that each divine Person in the Holy and undivided Trinity has wrought for us. And love becomes pure, when we love one another, not for the sake of private interest, but for the love of God, which is the great and unerring pattern we have to follow. For God loves us with a disinterested love; and if any man loves his neighbour for his own private profit and interest, his love is not pure, nor does it in any degree come up to that sublime pattern set us by God Himself. Here is the difference between Christian and heathen charity; a Christian loves his neighbour in God and in Christ Jesus, disinterestedly and generously, without mixing up selfish or ignoble motives, and is therefore without falsehood, dissimulation, or counterfeit. The heathen pollute their deeds with self-honour, and interest, and other sinister ends, which mingle with the best of their actions.

Oh, what a holy and happy state of mind is that which shews love in every action! where mercy and tenderness pervade the whole temper, and vigorous efforts to relieve, and comfort, and soothe, are the fruits thereof! When we have the affairs of our neighbour as much at heart as our own, what courtesy, what consideration for the feelings, what tenderness, what self-devotion, are the result! if need be, we are ready to lay down our life for the brethren! This is a state of love, not to be attained without long and earnest striving; our hindrances are many, our dispositions are rebellious; but if we seek to be Christ's, let us go on cultivating it, for it is the very spirit of Christ Himself!

Oh, my soul, have fervent charity ; for on the wings of this love, the prayers of Christians sweetly ascend to heaven ! By prayer, all good gifts are to be obtained ; and without it, all helps and consolations are sought for in vain. But their prayer must spring from this all-enlivening spirit of love ; for God gives ear to no prayers but those that are grounded on faith and charity.

“If two of you agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.”

Rouse thyself then, O my soul ; if each individual make the effort, then harmony and agreement will be among Christians upon earth. Live in the spirit of love ; let peace and union be revived, for where peace is, there is the God of peace ; and where He is, there He hath promised His blessing, and life for evermore.



Thursday before Whit Sunday.

If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.—I Peter, iv. 11.



GOD the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven ; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless ; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen.

We are all partakers of the grace of God. O. blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, after He

had delivered us from the thralldom of sin, ascended into heaven, and thence sent His Holy Spirit to His dearly loved and lately found children. This gift it is still the high privilege of the Church of Christ to inherit; and it is by baptism that we receive the seeds and beginnings of that grace which we are to cherish and cultivate, if we would have it to become a goodly tree whose branches reach up to heaven. Each baptized person is a possessor of this gift, and by it he becomes a minister of God. God has bestowed upon him something, from which he expects some acknowledgment and return to Himself, and also that some portion of it should be ministered to the members of His body, whom in a lower sense He considers as part of Himself. Seeing, then, that I am a minister of God, let me consider how I am to "wait on my ministry."

First, I am manifestly in duty bound to render service, praise, and adoration to God, my Creator, my Redeemer, my Sanctifier; and the duties of my ministry plainly require that this should be done in as perfect a manner as my imperfect nature admits of; but even while bewailing my manifold lets and hindrances, I must not forget that I have supernatural aid from God the Holy Spirit, and that He will do that for me which I could not do for myself. I shall, in waiting upon my ministry, consider my imperfections, my sinful inclinations, my downward tendencies, and I shall use my best efforts to subdue, to purify, to raise my thoughts, inclinations, and habits, so as to make my body a temple fit for the Holy Spirit to dwell in. I shall also examine my mental qualifications, my talents, the good points of my character, and these I shall cultivate and improve, so as to make them all "ministers of God for good;" I must remember

that vanity consists in parading good qualities, or such as are supposed to be good, for the admiration of men ; but that knowing of them, and cultivating them for the service and to the glory of God, is far from leading to vanity. Alas ! our best talents, our most strenuous exertions, are not worthy to be brought into the presence of the Most High. It is His love, and mercy, and kindness above, that makes Him regard them ! And, as regards the members of Christ's body, our dear brethren in Christ Jesus, we have a ministry to perform ; our best endeavours for their temporal welfare, our efforts to promote their spiritual improvement, we owe to God. The very talents and good qualities which are to be God's by our special dedication, are to become so by their being used in the service and for the benefit of men ; our very faults must be warnings to them ; our intercourse and conversation, and our attendance in the house of the Lord, our behaviour when there, our goings out and comings in ;—all ought to be in some way used, not only for our own benefit, but for the benefit of our fellow servants, and fellow heirs of God's gracious promises. If they be not used for the benefit, they will be entirely turned to the harm and the destruction of souls, both theirs and ours ; there is no negative conduct, no middle course. O my soul, remember this, and be very diligent in thy improvement of God's gracious gifts to thee ; spend health, strength, talents, time, money, all that thou hast, in God's service and to His glory. Thou wilt still be a miserably unprofitable servant ; but thou wilt have given "thy best, thine all."

Friday before Whit Sunday.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ our Lord.—1 Peter, iv. 11.



GOD the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen.

How greatly are we indebted to the bounty of the Lord, for having redeemed us with so precious a ransom, saved us with so noble a gift, honoured us with so high a privilege! What love, what reverence, and fear, and thanks, and praise, and glory, ought wretched sinners to pay to a God, Who has thus pitied, and loved, and rescued, and sanctified us! The whole of our ability and our knowledge, our life and being, ought to be given up, as His just tribute. But what can I do, what have I, what am I, that is not His already? My soul, beseech thy God to impart to thee, for His Name's-sake, of His good treasure, of His own good gifts, that thou mayest have something to offer Him back; and that by His grace assisting thee, thou mayest be enabled to serve and please Him in faithfulness and truth.

For, alas! I am very sensible that the power of serving and pleasing Him is entirely His gift, since every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,

and cometh down from the Father of Light, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. And in this state, I address myself to Thee, O Father Almighty, acknowledging Thy power ; O Father of Mercy, depending on Thy goodness ; O Lord, incomprehensible, adoring Thy infinite perfections ; O Maker and Restorer of all things by Thy Son Jesus Christ, in confidence of Thy love through that most holy Saviour, Whom Thou hast vouchsafed to send out of Thy own bosom, for our own benefit ; to take our life, that He might give us His ; to be perfect Man, of the substance of His Mother, as He is perfect God, of the substance of Thee, His Father ; perfect God, and perfect Man, but still one Christ begotten from all eternity, but born in time, Immortal and mortal, Creator and creature, Strong and weak, Victor and vanquished, the Nourisher and the nourished, the Shepherd and the sheep, dead for a season, yet ever living with Thee ; in the name of this wonderful Person, I venture to approach Thee ; and well may I, since He Who cannot lie has left this joyful assurance to all that love Him, That whatsoever such ask the Father in His Name, He will not fail to give it to them. By this great, this true, this only perfect High Priest, this Bishop of Souls, Who offered Himself a spotless and propitiatory sacrifice to Thy justice ; by this Good Shepherd, Who laid down His life for His sheep ; by this Mediator and Redeemer, Who sitteth at Thy right hand making intercession for us, I implore Thy mercy, O most tender lover of mankind, that Thou, this Thy Son, and Thy blessed Spirit, would grant me grace worthily and constantly to magnify Thy glorious Name ; with deep remorse and godly sorrow for my sins, with humility and tears, with reverence, and with fear

22 *Saturday before Whit Sunday.*

and trembling. But though the spirit within me is willing, yet I am weighed down by this corruptible body; I beseech Thee, O God, to stir up and quicken me, and so influence my will that I may vigorously strive to keep Thy commandments, and endeavour steadfastly to persevere therein. Draw me, I humbly pray Thee, continually nearer to my ascended Saviour, that He at last may bring me to those happy mansions where He now sits at Thy right hand—where is life and bliss everlasting, where joyful love abounds, and fear is done away; where Thou, with that blessed Son, as does that blessed Son with Thee, livest and reignest in the unity of the Divine Spirit, ever one God, world without end.
Amen.



Saturday before Whit Sunday.

To Whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever.
1 Peter, iv. 11.



GOD, the King of Glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen.

O my soul, God forbid that thou shouldst think the Cross of Christ a thing to be ashamed of; that thou shouldst not glory in it, nay, that thou shouldst think any other thing a matter of just glory and

advantage to thee, but only the Name of thy omniscient Lord Christ Jesus ! Make thou thy boast then, in that Name, which is above every name, in which whosoever is blessed on earth shall be blessed also in heaven. Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed ; yea, let them ever praise His holy Name. O come and let us ascribe honour to our Saviour, Who has done so great things for us ; great things, whereof we do, and ought to rejoice. Lift up your hearts and join your voices, all ye children of grace and redemption, and let us magnify His Name together, saying, We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee ; we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Christ the King of Israel, the Light of the Gentiles, the Prince of all the kings of the earth, the Lord of Hosts, the Power of God Almighty in its utmost strength and perfection !

We worship Thee, O precious and invaluable Ransom of our souls, O our Peace, and most acceptable Sacrifice, Who by the sweet smelling savour of Thy sin-offering didst incline the Father, Who dwellest on high, to cast an eye of pity upon His vile creatures here below, and didst open a way to reconciliation for the sons of wrath and perdition. We proclaim the praise of Thy mercy, O blessed Jesus, and out of the abundance of our hearts do gratefully recount the sweetness of Thy love. We offer unto Thee our daily sacrifice of gratitude and glory, for the incomprehensible excellence of Thy goodness, and for that tender and unbounded compassion which Thou hast been pleased to shew to us miserable, degraded sinners. Praise then the Lord, O my soul, and magnify the mercies of the compassionate Jesus. Tell it out among all the world how exceeding gracious He

hath been to thee, and give Him the honour due unto His glorious Name, for His Name only is excellent, and His praise above heaven and earth !



Whit Sunday.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

Acts, ii. 4.



GOD, Who miraculously sentest down Thy Holy Ghost to supply the absence of Thy Son, and to comfort His forlorn followers, and instruct them in all things necessary to their great work, the conversion of the world ; grant, we meekly beseech Thee, that our devout commemoration at this time of those fiery tongues which sat upon each of their heads, and which produced such glorious effects, may increase the fervour of my heart to continue and attest, by all the fruits of grace, that the same Spirit still does abide with and live with me ; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who with Thee, in the unity of the same blessed Spirit, liveth and reigneth one God, world without end.
Amen.

Here is another high festival, on which I must prepare my soul to rejoice, and praise God for His goodness, and for the wonders He doeth for the children of men. This is the day of Pentecost : behold the gathering together of all the believers in our Lord and Saviour ; they are brethren ; but as yet they are cemented together purely by the love they all bear to their crucified and ascended Lord ; we know how fickle is the human heart, and how

weak a bond mere feeling is in keeping men together after the first excitement is over; these men are in the full tide of their love and adoration of their Lord and Master, and they are waiting for that supernatural gift which He promised them, and which is to cement them together a building, strong, imperishable, whose chief corner stone is Christ Jesus the Lord.

Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. They were all illuminated with a pure light, and all inflamed with a fervent heat; and to communicate both these to every nation, they were all endued with the gift of tongues. Thus was the promise of our Lord fulfilled, and thus the messengers of everlasting peace prepared; miraculously baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and perfectly qualified for their great commission.

A great multitude is gathered together on hearing the fame of these wonderful things; and Peter stands up, surrounded by the eleven; he speaks to them of the prophecies which announce this marvellous event; he speaks to them, but with reverent reserve, of Him Whom he so ardently loved—of Jesus of Nazareth: and he ends His sermon by declaring that He Whom they crucified, is both Lord and Christ.


These words, dictated by the holy Spirit of our God, penetrated into the hearts of Peter's hearers. They were pricked in the heart, and exclaimed, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then said Peter, "Repent, and be baptized." He shewed them of the salvation which is by Christ

Jesus, and he promised them the gift of the Holy Ghost; three thousand were in this manner brought to the knowledge of salvation, and received the inestimable, unspeakable gift, which Christ Jesus our Lord has purchased, and has sent down to His Church. And still the same blessed Spirit abideth in the Church, and still conveys the same blessings to her faithful children. Canst thou, O my soul, continue a member of this blessed society, and not search more diligently for the graces bestowed upon those who are faithful in all things. O beseech thy God to vouchsafe unto thee the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of knowledge, the spirit of holiness and of the fear of the Lord; with these strengthening aids and companions of thy pilgrimage, thou mayest still hope to attain the end of thy endeavours, even thy salvation; but it will be a struggle, a warfare; put no trust in anything but the strength of the cross. Thy crucified Saviour marks thy warfare; lay hold on His cross, appropriate to thyself the cleansing efficacy of His blood; bury thy old man with Him; rise with Him to newness of life. Behold Him sitting at the right hand of the Father; fall down, worship, kneel before Him! He sends thee His holy Spirit to quicken thee, to purify thee, and to raise thee to His eternal kingdom.



Whit Monday.

I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter.—St. John, xiv. 16.

 **G**OD the Holy Ghost, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness, in which Thou wilt in the largest manner communicate Thyself to happy souls, when in the enjoyment of Thee, O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

How tenderly did our gracious Master sympathize with His disciples! Though He could no longer be with them, as in times past, yet He would not leave them helpless; He, the incarnate Son of God, was about to ascend to the right hand of Power, and for the merits of His all-atoning sacrifice receiving gifts for men, He would procure them another Comforter, a Person, Who would be to them, what He Himself had been; a Person, Who would be a Friend and Comforter to them, and would abide, in that character, in the Church for ever. Here is manifested that the blessed and holy Spirit of God, is indeed a Person. None but God could succeed to the place which our Lord Jesus Christ held with respect to His disciples; none could be a Comforter as He was, but God; this then was their consolation, they were to have a

Comforter, Who, in their guilt and their helplessness, would teach them; Who would sanctify their tempers, their minds, their conversation; Who would pity their weakness, and impart to them that peace which passeth all understanding.

Such a Comforter, God the Holy Ghost, came down to the Church on the day of Pentecost. He is God from everlasting to everlasting; one with the Father and the Son. As God, He moved on the face of the waters at the creation; as God, He inspired the holy men, under the old dispensation, to perform all the holy actions and great works which I read of in the Old Testament; as God, He inspired holy men to write the Scriptures; and, as God, on the day of Pentecost, He assumed His office in the divine scheme of redemption, as the Paraclete or Comforter.

And now let me take these thoughts home to me, and consider that there is a Divine Person even now ready to come to me, to comfort me in all my troubles, to infuse strength into my soul, and to assist me in my spiritual warfare; but am I a fit temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in? Let me seriously consider this. Am I not only desirous to profess godliness, but to lead a consistent and godly life? Am I determined to keep alive the grace I have had conferred upon me, by constant, regular, and earnest prayer? Do I remember that the continual presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, should make me very desirous constantly to partake of the privileges granted to me in her, and that therefore I should be constant in public worship, obedient and teachable when her doctrines are expounded by her ministers, constant in attendance at the Holy Communion, where I shall receive, if I go with a faithful and loving heart, grace, and

strength, and peace, and joy; all bestowed by that Divine Comforter, God the Holy Ghost, Whose presence is my only hope, my only joy, and my only earnest of future blessings and future glory.



Tuesday in Whitsun Week.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.—Acts, viii. 14, 15.



GOD the Holy Ghost, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness where Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O holy and blessed Trinity, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

When Peter and John were sent to the people of Samaria, they persisted in the faith of their departed Lord, and desired with intense devotion and love that He would shower down the gifts He had purchased for those who love Him, upon the faithful in Samaria; they prayed, and the Holy Ghost did indeed descend upon the converts. He, Who is the Spirit of prayer, grants His influences to our

prayers, and He moves us to approach the throne of grace. Why do we ascribe all these blessed effects to Him? It is because He so closely unites our hearts to God in the communion we have with Him in all our spiritual duties; because He is that everlasting Spirit, Who, with the Father and the Son, makes up the unity of the Godhead. Our spiritual relation with God is begun by faith, in our baptism, and is the gift of the Spirit, which we prevail upon Him to bestow by our prayers; and our prayers are acceptable, when offered up in the Spirit, assisting and inspiring our devotions. When incense was offered in the temple of Solomon, it was filled with the glory of the Lord; and if I offer up my prayers—"the offerings of a sweet smelling savour,"—the temple of my heart will be filled with the glory of the Holy Spirit.

Let me pause, and admire the mercy and kindness of God. The Son intercedes for us, the Father promises to hear and accept our prayers through that powerful intercession, and the blessed Spirit teaches us what prayers to offer up from the altar of our hearts, and Himself prays with us. Our merciful God gives us affections to pray to Him when He bestows upon us the influences of His grace and the spirit of prayer; He also renders our prayers effectual, being always ready to hear us; and He answers us, not according to our wills, but as He knows is best for us.

As long as the blessed Spirit of God abides in us, so long there is a happy union between God and our souls; but no sooner does man by his sins become apostate to his faith in Christ, and his charity to his fellow creatures, and hereby does despite unto the Spirit of God, but there follows a separation; and the blessed union between God

and the soul ceases to exist. He who has the Spirit of God hateth not his brother; and the reason of this is, that this Spirit incorporates him into the mystical body of Christ, of which all the faithful are members. Whoever hated any of those members of which his body is composed? Nay, if the Spirit of God govern our actions, we shall love our enemies also. Let me then seek ever more and more to be influenced by this holy ever blessed Spirit; let me spend myself in the service of God, in loving and serving His creatures; let me pray without ceasing, that the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit may descend and fill my whole soul, and that it may bring forth in me those exquisite fruits of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

For these blessed fruits, and all His holy gifts, be honour and glory to this blessed Spirit, with the Father and the Son, throughout all ages. *Amen.*



Wednesday in Whitsun Week.

I am come that they might have life.

St. John. x. 10.



GOD the Holy Ghost, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness, in which Thou wilt in the largest manner communi-

cate Thyself to happy souls, when in the enjoyment of Thee, O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thy benefits, O my God, are mighty. Thou art the Hope of those, from whom all other hope is fled; Thou art the Crown of Glory which shall adorn every head that overcometh; Thou, the eternal fullness of those blessed souls who hunger and thirst after Thy righteousness; Thou, the never-failing Comfort, communicating Thyself to those who are willing to forego all other comforts, and are content to abide in Thee, and seek Thy graces and blessings, as their only and sole good.

My Lord and my God! bring me, I pray Thee, out of the prison of my worldly desires and external senses; let me give thanks unto Thee, and rejoice in the light of Thy countenance. Grant me the help of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may appropriate to myself that life given me by Thee, my dearest Lord and Saviour; that Spirit which will breathe unto me the breath of spiritual life, which will strengthen my will and quicken my desire of serving Thee; that Spirit which will unite me to Thee, and through Thee to the great mystical Body of which Thou art the Head; and will influence my love for each of my fellow members, so that I should sooner think of hurting or injuring myself, than of doing any despite unto any of Thy elect. Oh, give me this Thy life; this new, spiritual existence, which as it is Thy purchase, so is it Thy free gift unto men.

O Holy Spirit, descend into my soul, turn everything there into light and life; let no corrupt affections, unholy desires, or stubborn will, remain there, but bring all into subjection to the law of God, and keep it pure, unblemished, a holy temple for Thy-

self. I know and acknowledge Thee the one true God, O Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son; of the same substance and eternity with the Father and the Son, our Advocate and Comforter; Who didst descend like a dove, upon our Lord Jesus Christ, and didst appear in fiery tongues upon the apostles; Who hast, from the beginning of the world, shed abroad the gifts of Thy grace upon all the saints and chosen of God, and opened the mouths of the prophets that they might reveal the wonders of the Kingdom; Who, with the Father and the Son together, art worshipped in all the Churches of the saints. Among whom, I also, Thy meanest servant, beg leave to publish Thy praises for the saving life communicated to my soul. For Thou art the true Light, the saving fire of God, to whom all saints are subject; Thou art the Spirit of Truth, Who, by Thy unction teacheth us all truth; without Whose grace it is impossible to please God; for Thou art God of God, and Light proceeding in an ineffable manner from the Father of Lights, and from His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

With these, Thou art co-equal, and co-eternally united in the same essence; and with them reignest, and art glorified by a most stupendous and most holy union.



Thursday in Whitsun Week.

And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.—Acts, ii. 47.



GOD the Holy Ghost, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness in which Thou wilt in the largest manner communicate Thyself to happy souls; where, in the enjoyment of Thee, O holy and blessed Trinity, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The great work which we celebrate on the feast of Pentecost is now fairly commenced; the Church is a real, living, and active society. That "new thing," which, according to the prophets, the Lord was to do upon earth, is now accomplished; for a Church similar to that which had just been formed, had never been seen upon earth. What can be a greater proof of this than the aspect of this first Christian community? The Holy Spirit works in it, in an entirely new manner, and shews that a new period of God's government has begun. What a glorious picture does the first planting of the word present! The life of heaven seems indeed to have established its dwelling-place in this vale of tears! A community dedicated to God consisting of three thousand souls; but a community such as neither

Moses nor Elias, nor any of the old saints had ever beheld !

Alas, alas, what a sad and wide difference there is between this apostolic Church, and that of our own times ; the same sad change that has taken place in the land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands, where God led His chosen people, and where He did so many signs and wonders, where He decreed that His well-beloved Son should take up His abode while on earth, and which is now a rocky and desert waste, surrounded by the confusion of Babel, and the barbarism of the crescent ! Still, the Holy Spirit of God remains with the Church, and it behoves all her children to exert themselves individually to bring back the spirit of the apostolic age, and to cast into the mass the leaven of personal holiness and personal zeal, in order that the whole lump may in time be leavened.

In order to accomplish this, we must put on the whole armour of God ; and in the spirit of meekness and true obedience we must keep all the commandments of God blameless. Here is no need of terror ; the thunderings and earthquakes of the law are done away, but the still small voice of the Spirit in the gospel, is a deep, penetrating, overwhelming sound, not terrifying, but which works itself into the very joints and marrow. The curses no longer ring loud from Mount Ebal ; in their stead we see tears, and drops of blood, a crown of thorns, and a heart of love pierced and broken—we see a cross ! The Son of God suffered to purchase for Himself a Church ; the Son of God is in heaven interceding for His Church ! The Holy Ghost is with that Church to keep it and strengthen it, and give it the graces and blessings which were so dearly purchased for it ! And so we come round to the ever-

lasting theme, to the one thing needful ; although there may be no terror, and the hair may not stand on end at the sound of redemption, yet there is an inexpressible melting and softening of the heart ; although there may be no fear and anguish as amidst the thunders of the law, yet there is prostration at the feet of JESUS ; although the limbs may not tremble, yet silent tears are dropping which Jesus watches ; and although we do not cry out as on Mount Sinai, " I exceedingly fear and quake," we say what is far better, " Lord Jesus, I am Thine for ever ! If I only possess Thee, I ask nothing more, either in heaven or earth !"



Friday in Whitsun Week.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Galations, vi. 14.



ALL the honour of the saints is purchased from the ignominy our Lord bore at His passion ; all their comfort proceeds from the wounds of our dying Saviour ; our glory is His exaltation. How great is Thy pity, O heavenly Father ! O Lord God Almighty, I have through my own folly offended Thee, but I have not been able, through anything that is in me, to pacify Thy wrath ; Thou therefore dost, in Christ, reconcile me to Thyself. Behold, therefore, O holy God, the sacrament of Thy own Flesh, and forgive me the guilt of mine ; have a merciful regard to what Thy dear Son has suffered for me, and forget what Thy wicked servant has done against Thee. My carnal

nature has provoked Thee to anger; let the Flesh of Christ, I beseech Thee, incline Thee to pity. Great is what my iniquity doth deserve, but greater far is what the holiness of my Redeemer has, by His merit, purchased for me; great is my unrighteousness, but greater is the righteousness of my Saviour; for as far as God is above man, so far is my wickedness inferior to His goodness, as in the quality, so likewise in the extensiveness. Whatever I am, I am wholly Thine by condition; grant that I may be wholly Thine by love. Thou givest me grace to ask; grant that I may so ask as to receive. Thou givest me grace to seek; grant that I may find. Thou teachest me to knock; open, therefore, unto me. From Thee, I have all my holy desires; from Thee let me have the blessings of prevailing. From Thee it proceeds that I have a will to serve Thee; from Thee let me have the strength to perform it.

O blessed God, Thou just Judge, if I hide my sins, they are incurable; if I expose them, they are dreadful—they sting me with grief, but they terrify me more with fear; withhold not, I pray Thee, Thy so bounteous mercy, where Thou findest so much real misery; Thou findest in me sin that is great—let Thy grace still be greater, and more abound.

O blessed Father, pour not out Thy wrath upon me, when for my sin's sake Thou hast smitten Thine own Son. O holy Jesus, do Thou rescue me from the divine wrath, Who for me didst bear the weight of it on Thy cross. O Holy Ghost, protect me with Thy inward consolations, against the anger of God, Who, in the gospel, has declared mercy to all that are truly penitent and of a contrite heart. O God of holiness, and just Judge, I can find no place

where to hide myself from Thy presence, when Thou art angry. If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down to hell, behold Thou art there; if I shall take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, even there Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. To Christ, therefore, I will flee, and in His wounds will I hide myself. O merciful God, look down upon the body of Thy Son, all over bleeding with wounds, and do not behold those wounds my sins have made in my soul; let the blood of Thy Son wash me from all the stains and defilements of sin; hear those most ardent prayers of His which He offers up to Thee, for the salvation of His elect. O God of holiness, Thou just Judge, my life strikes terror into my soul; for when I diligently examine into it, it appears all over sin and barrenness; and if there seems to be any fruit of goodness in it, it is so dissembled and imperfect, or, by some means or other, so corrupt, that it may either not please, or even displease Thy eyes.

O Jesus Christ, for Thy Name's sake, do unto me according unto Thy Name; look favourably upon me when in my distress I call upon Thee. If Thou shalt admit me into the spacious bosom of Thy mercy, there will not be then less room in it on my account. It is true, O Lord, my guilty conscience tells me I have deserved damnation, and my repentance is not sufficient to make satisfaction; but yet Thy mercy exceeds all my offences. In Thee, O Lord, do I trust; let me not be confounded for ever. *Amen.*

Saturday in Whitsun Week.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans, viii. 2.



GOD the Holy Ghost, I beseech Thee breathe into my soul those graces by which I may be saved ! Thou only art the Author of true holiness, Thou only art the principle of true spiritual life. Fill me with Thy blessed fruits, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that I, living in Thee, may walk in Thee, till I go from the lower measures of grace to that state of happiness where Thou wilt, in the largest manner, communicate Thyself to happy souls ; where, in the enjoyments of Thee, O holy and blessed Trinity, we shall live for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O Thou plenteous source of every good and every perfect gift, shed abroad the cheering light of Thy seven-fold grace over my heart. O Thou Spirit of love and goodness, I most humbly implore Thy seasonable assistances. Thou knowest my faults, my failings, and my necessities ; the dimness of my understanding, the perverseness of my affections, the stubbornness of my will ; Thou seest that oftentimes I am very weak, infirm of purpose, ill-instructed in Thy blessed motions ; or that I am led away by outward circumstances, giddy and careless, knowing my duty but failing to practise it. O then, visit me ! Send me Thy grace, enlighten my mind, rectify my desires, correct my wanderings, and pardon my omissions, that so I who invoke

Thee here as my Pilot, to conduct me through this rough and hazardous sea of life, may, by Thy guidance, be preserved from making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and at length be safely landed at the haven of eternal rest. To Thee I make my prayer, most merciful Father, that Thou, Who gavest me being by Thy creating power, and since didst give me a new and better being, by the sufferings of Thy only begotten Son, wouldst work in me both to do Thy will, and to do of Thy good pleasure ; and fix my thoughts and affections upon such objects only as conduce to Thy honour and my own salvation. And since my frailties are great, and I cannot do what I ought and would, preserve in me a due care to make my peace with Thee daily, by confession of my past faults, by diligent examinations of my conscience, and resolution of living better, and growing every day more and more in goodness, till at length I obtain the benefits purchased for me by my dear Redeemer. Help me, I beseech Thee, to gain such victories over my sins, and fortify me so effectually against temptations, and grant me to advance so prosperously in the way of holiness, that the remainder of the time I spend in this mortal body, I may be always doing Thee acceptable service, such as Thy providence shall propose to me.

And when this life shall end, Lord, of Thine infinite mercy grant me an entire remission of all my sins, and reward my imperfect obedience with eternal life.

All which I beg for His merits and mediation Who died to purchase it for sincere and true believers ; and Who now liveth and reigneth with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

**The Annunciation of the Blessed
Virgin Mary.**

Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be unto me according to thy word.—St. Luke, i. 38.

WE beseech Thee, O Lord, pour Thy grace into our hearts; that, as we have known the incarnation of Thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by His cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let me, on this great festival, solemnly adore the Word made Flesh. On this day the angel was sent from God to the Virgin Mary. The young and spotless Virgin was occupied in her usual quiet and calm devotions; those devotions which, in the unostentatious duties of a quiet life, had knit her heart to her God, and had made her fit to be selected as the instrument for bringing into the world the eternal Son of God. Great are the mysteries of this high subject. I may not seek curiously to enquire why God chose this mode of bringing His Son into the world; why He did not dispense with the usual method of doing so, and at once send the Holy Child to her whom He had selected as His nurse and attendant; I can only adore and wonder at the mystery and at the condescension of Him Who did not abhor the Virgin's womb.

The angel made his wonderful announcement to Mary, "Behold thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and

the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David." Let me attentively read over the astonishing and affecting narrative, and then let me especially consider the conduct of the Virgin Mary. At that time, the expectation of the promised Messiah had reached its height among the Jewish people; the time pointed out by prophecy had arrived, and there was a general looking out for "Him that was for to come." No doubt all the women of Judah were desirous of becoming the mother of the Messias.

Under these circumstances, the salutation of the angel could not fail to be the most exciting that could be made; and how does Mary receive it? Not with exclamation and noise; but she cast in her mind what manner of salutation it could be; her well regulated thoughts were not sent astray by the unexpected event; but she entered into her own mind, and drew therefrom all the quiet reasonings and information she had stored there, and she possessed her soul in peace; but as the angel went on in his announcement, Mary was led to ask one question; and, when reminded by the angel of the unbounded power of God, she yielded up herself in devout submission, and exclaimed, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

There never was faith like this—never obedience so marked, so perfect. Let me endeavour to follow so holy an example. Here is a mystery so deep that the understanding of man cannot fathom it. Here is an instance of divine love so high, that finite capacities cannot reach up to it—**THE WORD MADE FLESH**—this is the mystery. "The Word was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld His glory (the glory as of the only begotten

Son of the Father), full of grace and truth,"—this is the fact. Believe, my soul—adore thy gracious and merciful God, and say, Behold the handmaid of the Lord ! But beyond this, I believe that if I, in holy devotion, in the quiet performance of my daily duties, in love to my God and in charity to my neighbour, seek to be the handmaid of the Lord, He will then vouchsafe to come into my soul,—I shall conceive Him there, nourish Him with ardent affections, and bring Him forth in a life of piety—and that then He will abide in me and I in Him for ever. How can this be, O my gracious, most blessed, most transcending Saviour? Thou dost not despise Thy poor creature; but Thou dost require such faith, such love, such devoted calm self resignation, as were the Virgin Mary's. Cultivate in me this holy and happy frame of mind, O Saviour, and then send me what Thou wilt to try me—affliction of any sort, so Thou art with me—and even if for a season Thou withdraw Thy sensible comforts, still let me put my sure trust in Thee, and exclaim, Behold the handmaid of the Lord !



St. Mark's Day.

And He gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

Ephesians, iv. 11, 12.



ALMIGHTY God, Who hast instructed Thy Holy Church with the heavenly doctrine of Thy Evangelist St. Mark ; Give us grace, that, being not like children carried away

with every blast of vain doctrine, we may be established in the truth of Thy Holy Gospel, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, in His loving care for His Church, has given various gifts to men. They are given for our use, and for our edification ; and every festival, as it comes in its yearly round, reminds us of the good gifts purchased for us. St. Mark's work and his gift, was that of an Evangelist ; as such, his gift is still in active operation among us ; but when he was yet alive, he added the vocation of a pastor and teacher to his other high calling ; and he died the death of a martyr, to preach to the Church universal, his faith, and his hope, in Christ Jesus.

St. Mark journeyed about with St. Paul, and ministered to the comfort of the great apostle during his wants and imprisonment. When death had ended the earthly warfare of St. Paul, St. Mark again joined St. Peter ; and wrote his Gospel under the direct guidance and dictation of that most zealous of men.

As St. Mark listened to St. Peter's narrative of his beloved Master, so let me study his gospel ; with the reverent attention, which we pay to words spoken by the eye-witness of any remarkable event. The devout and reverent study of Holy Scripture, will lead to the raising and confirming of my faith ; will instruct me in everlasting righteousness, and will give me that knowledge, which will prevent my being carried about by every blast of vain doctrine. In this age, men are like the Athenians of old,—who spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing ; and as we must always be prepared against the prevailing vice of the age in which we live, my duty is, so to study

Scripture, especially the Gospels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that my faith may become firm, built, and founded on a rock ; and that I may hold fast the profession of my faith and hope without wavering, looking to Jesus, and by His example and His suffering cheered on, both to do and to suffer whatever may be necessary to maintain His glory, and also to work out my own salvation.

Blessed be the grace of God, who has attested throughout the Catholic Church, the truth delivered to us by His apostle and evangelist, the chief assistant and companion of St. Peter. Beautiful, most beautiful, are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace. They minister before the Throne, and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Omnipotent, Who Was, and Is, and Is to come !



St. Philip and St. James.

Blessed is the man who endureth temptation ; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.—St. James, i. 12.



ALMIGHTY God, whom truly to know is everlasting life ; Grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life ; that, following the steps of Thy holy apostles, Saint Philip and Saint James, we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life ; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

This day we hold in remembrance two holy men

who, joined together in Christian brotherhood, preached the gospel of Christ Jesus, and suffered martyrdom in His cause, it is supposed, on this day.

Philip of Bethsaida, followed our Lord on His first gracious invitation; and brought Nathanael to the Saviour's feet, after having borne testimony to His being the Lord, from his perfect knowledge of the law and the prophets. Philip is not often mentioned in Scripture; one doubting question he puts, and one full answer suffices to shew him the wonderful mystery of the Divine Unity.

St. James, called "the Lord's brother," was the son of Cleopas and Mary, and was therefore cousin, according to the flesh, to Him Whom he loved steadfastly, and died rather than renounce.

There is a mention of the appearance of our Lord after His resurrection to St. James, but the subject of that interview is not revealed. St. James, called by way of distinction, "the less," became the first bishop of Jerusalem. His task in preaching Jesus to a worldly, self-seeking people, full of the pride of intellect and of the notions of a false philosophy, was no easy one; prayer was his only refuge, and he poured out his soul to his God, seeking, in communion with Him, that comfort which the world gave him not. He was killed by the furious mob, at the instigation of the chief priests and scribes, while endeavouring to address the people. Thus ended a life of trial, difficulty, labour, and persecution.

The grace of God poured upon this holy man had lighted in him such a flame of devotion, such an earnestness in prayer, that all his troubles were light to him.

What are thy troubles, thy hindrances, O my soul; what are any trials or hindrances in these

days, compared with those so triumphantly overcome by St. James? Let the consideration of the all-powerful aid of the Holy Spirit kindle in thee much courage in thy Christian warfare; if thou seekest it in earnest, it will be granted thee in such abundance that, if thou art called upon to yield thy life rather than thy faith, thou wilt have strength to lay it down cheerfully and willingly, remembering thy Saviour's exclamation: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."



TRINITY.

Trinity Sunday.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Which was, and is, and is to come.—Revelations, iv. 8.



ETERNAL Father, Who by the visible descent of Thy Son to redeem the world, and of Thy Holy Spirit to sanctify the elect, hast wonderfully made Thy Church's own experience facilitate our faith of the incomprehensible Trinity, grant me, I beseech Thee, in heart and voice to profess this high and marvellous truth; and rejecting all the suggestions of weak reason, humbly to adore this ineffable mystery of Three co-equal Persons in the same indivisible Deity, till I come hereafter to Thy blissful presence, and see the mystery revealed, O God, our Father, in Thine own glorious face, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Divine Majesty, world without end.

I fervently desire to keep the faith whole and undefiled, in its fulness and simplicity, and to worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. I understand by Substance, *Being, Existence*; by Person, an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, Thou, He; and not divided into more intelligent agents capable of the same character. And I believe that there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and an-

other of the Holy Ghost ; Whose Godhead is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.

Let me not seek to explain how these things can be, but let me receive with reverential faith what is revealed. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible ; yea, indeed, incomprehensible, without limit, without compass, beyond my feeble imagination to conceive, and higher than my most exalted aspiration !

Yet there are not three eternal, neither three incomprehensibles, nor yet three uncreated ; but **ONE** Eternal, **ONE** Incomprehensible, **ONE** Uncreated. Mysterious but blessed truth ! I accept it from the ground of my heart. There is an everlasting distinction between the Persons, though we attempt not to explain how it can be. The Son and the Holy Ghost are both of the Father ; the one begotten, the other proceeding. The mode of this we know not. So there is one Father, not three Fathers ; one Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts ; and in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another, but the whole Three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal.

So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. I am silent, O Lord, I am a creature of unclean lips ! How can I talk of these wondrous things ! O send Thine angel with the fire of Thy Holy Spirit to touch my tongue, then I will fall prostrate before Thy throne, and exclaim with the four and twenty elders, " Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." Three times holy, shewing forth

the Trinity; Lord God, denoting the Unity. O Lord, deep here calleth unto deep; deeper is this mystery than heaven is high. Thou, O God, alone art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power.

Daily am I invited to worship the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, when I say, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning," when the sons of God shouted for joy: "is now," when the angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, with the Church on earth, laud and magnify the glorious Name; "and ever shall be," when the Church triumphant shall sing alleluia eternally in the heavenly Jerusalem. Resolve, O my soul, no longer to pass over this divine hymn as a matter of course, or as a mere ending to each psalm; but each time the solemn words are repeated let my spirit ascend to the heaven of heavens; there see the throne, and Him Who sits thereon, like unto a jasper and a sapphire stone, with the rainbow round about Him; see the elders, and the seven lamps of fire, and the sea of glass, and the beasts; and with all thy powers worship, adore, and magnify the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity.



Monday after Trinity Sunday.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Jesus by night.—St. John, iii. 1, 2.



QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

Nicodemus is timid, fearful of what men might say of him, and yet earnestly seeking the right path by which to attain eternal life. He comes to Jesus by night. His courage will lead him far enough to seek Jesus secretly; but it will not carry him to the point of defying public opinion in his search. He comes in the darkness and stillness of night; note the calm majesty with which our Blessed Lord converses with the timid hearer, on the deep things of the Spirit. He who cometh to the Lord, He will in no wise cast out, and so was it with Nicodemus. That holy intercourse was blessed to him; and I may suppose that our Lord, regarding his faith, gave him such a measure of grace, as enabled him to cast off, by degrees, his timidity, and to gird himself with strength for the warfare that was before him. I find him, in the narrative given by St. John, improved in courage, reasoning with the Jews for condemning our Lord unheard; and the perfection of his courage, and his love, is manifested by his bringing a costly mixture of spices to embalm that precious and sacred Body, after it had undergone the shame and pain of the cross; after it had suffered for the sins of the whole world, and among those sins for the cowardice of Nicodemus.

Consider, my soul, this example, and remember that thou art verily guilty in the same matter. How often hast thou made thyself appear to the world less religious than thou really art; and on retiring to the silence and solitude of thy chamber, thou hast prayed as if thy Lord was very dear to thee. What is this but coming to Jesus by night? How often hast thou passed by an occasion of confessing thy Lord, when that confession would have brought ridicule upon thee? In thy heart was faith; (and yet how weak!) but didst not thou come to

the Lord by night, instead of standing in the open face of day, and boldly confessing thy faith in Jesus thy Saviour?

But approach the loving and gracious Lord; converse with Him; open the windows of thy heart wide, to admit Him. Then wilt thou lose thy fear; thou wilt deprecate the wrath of His enemies, and thou wilt bring the sweet spices of thy prayers, thine alms, thy self-devotion, yea, the sacrifice of thy body, soul, and spirit, and thou wilt openly, in the sight of all men, lay them before thy Lord, thy Saviour, and thy God.


O Thou, Who hast received me, Thy unworthy servant, when I was brought unto Thee, to be Thy soldier and servant, grant that I may ever manfully fight under Thy banner against sin, the world, and the devil. Grant that I may continue faithful unto Thee till my life's end; and that being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in His death, I may crucify the old man and utterly abolish the whole body of sin, and that as I was made partaker of the death of Thy Son, I may be also a partaker of His resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of Thy holy Church, I may be an inheritor of Thine everlasting kingdom, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Tuesday after Trinity Sunday.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

St. John, iii. 3.

UICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

Yea, Lord, I know that I was born in wickedness, and conceived in sin. I know that by Adam's transgression, sin entered into the world, and death by sin. It was Thy free and unmerited mercy alone, that freed us from this state of perdition. Thou tookest upon Thee the iniquity of us all. Thou becamest man; Thou hast given us an example; Thou hast left us ordinances. Thou becamest a curse for us by suffering the penalty of the accursed, and Thou hast blotted out the handwriting which was against us. Thou sayest, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Some great change must be wrought in sinful and corrupt man, before he can be fit to see the kingdom of the all-pure God. It is wonderful how *any* means can render what is so corrupt and impure, fit for the unspeakable glories and joys of the heavenly kingdom! But with God all things are possible, and He has sent us grace from above by which He cleanses us; He regards that as pure, which before was impure; He looks upon the face of His Christ, He listens to the continual intercession of His dearly beloved Son, and He accepts, for

His merits, our imperfect obedience instead of that entire righteousness which we have not to offer.

I have been born again ; I have received the gift of the spirit ; God has purified me ; can I enter the kingdom of glory ? have I never vexed, or grieved, or quenched the Spirit ? have I been guilty of not sufficiently valuing my great privilege ? have I forgotten that here is not my abiding city and that I am a citizen of the heavenly kingdom ? and have I never been regardless of my vows to Him, Who, to purchase my redemption, left His throne in heaven, took upon Him the form of a servant, and poured out His Blood as a propitiation for me ?

Let the mercies of our God be so constantly before thee, my soul, that thou mayest preserve a sense of their greatness ; the mere fact that God should stoop to behold such creatures as we are, and should have contrived such a mighty scheme for our redemption, ought to be enough to overwhelm thee with gratitude and awe. O strive by constant meditation, and recollection of all these mercies, to keep alive in thee such love as will make thee avoid all the first approaches of sin, and will cause all things belonging to the Spirit to live and grow in thee.

BLESSED are those that are undefiled in the way : and walk in the law of the Lord.

Blessed are they that keep His testimonies : and seek Him with their whole heart.

For they who do no wickedness : walk in His ways.

Thou hast charged : that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments.

O that my ways were made so direct : that I might keep Thy statutes !

So shall I not be confounded : while I have respect unto all Thy commandments.

I will thank Thee with an unfeigned heart : when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness.

I will keep Thy ceremonies : O forsake me not utterly.



Wednesday after Trinity Sunday.

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

St. John, iii. 5.



QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord my God ; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

The things belonging to the Spirit can only be spiritually discerned. Nicodemus, on hearing of the new birth, could only think of the birth according to the course of nature. He knew not of the birth of the soul. Our blessed Lord, to shew the absolute necessity and certainty of this new birth, affirms it by "verily, verily," as He was always wont to preface an important truth. God is not a man that He should lie ; neither the son of man that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it ; or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good ? He saith, "Verily, verily, unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." As man is com-

posed of two parts, body and soul, so the mode of the latter birth is twofold ; water, the visible part, cleansing the body ; the Spirit, by His invisible co-operation, changing the invisible soul.

Let me consider that as an infant my parents took me to the font, I was there, in the arms of God's minister, received into the number of Christ's flock, was signed with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter I should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

O that I could feel that I had kept my soul pure and undefiled from its new birth ! Even as pure as is the body of a little infant, fair and lovely in all its proportions !

But alas, in many ways, at various times, I have defiled the baptismal purity of my soul, although I trust that, by God's mercy, I have not entirely fallen away from the grace then given. Blessed, praised, and glorified be the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity for thus admitting me to their communion and fellowship.

I thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast buried me with Thee in baptism. O grant that I may rise with Thee to newness of life ; grant that as the world loses its charm and loosens its hold upon me ; as the devil becomes less frequent and more weak in his attacks ; and as the flesh is brought more and more into subjection ; that as from a well of pure water spring ever fresh and sparkling streams, so from the spirit with which Thou hast endued me, may flow earnest meditations, frequent prayers, constant lookings for and longings after the eternal and immutable things of the heavenly kingdom, that so my whole self may become a temple filled with the Holy Ghost.

These are my aspirations ; too high they are and

not to be realized, for I know how unworthy I am of any extraordinary spiritual gifts; but Thou knowest, O Lord, the secrets of my heart, and while I humbly endeavour to follow the motions of Thy good Spirit, I say with the Psalmist:—

My soul hath patiently tarried for the Lord: for He is my help, and my shield.

For my heart shall rejoice in Him: because I have hoped in His holy Name.

Let Thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon me: like as I do put my trust in Thee.



Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.—St. John, iii. 7.



QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord my God; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

Great are the mysteries of godliness! Nicodemus could not understand how a man could be born again. Our Lord tells him, “Marvel not.” It is indeed a great and wonderful mystery, the secret operation of the Holy Spirit of God; how it works inwardly, quietly, but powerfully, invisibly, yet to be apprehended by the eye of faith; it cometh, it goeth, like the wind; but we are told not to question, or doubt, or marvel; we must receive in full faith, in firm hope, in entire confidence, even as little children receive the information and instruction of their parents.

How mysterious is every thing with which thou art surrounded, O my soul ! even thy existence in the body is a great mystery ; Thou art now active, alive to every good impression ; now asleep, overpowered by heaviness ; now giving way to sloth, or to the impressions of worldly pleasure ; now enjoying the full tide of spiritual privileges ; now dry and listless, dull and heavy ; now bowed down by the infirmities of the flesh ; now exhilarated by an unusual flow of bodily health ! What is all this mysterious connection of self, with that which is within self, with that also which is external to it ? O how great are the wonders of the Most High ! receive them all, O my soul, with the tender, loving, trusting faith of a little child ; and by so doing escape all the questions and disputings raised by curious minds, who will only believe what they understand, but who only undermine the faith, disturb the tranquillity, and unsettle the calm peace of a soul that truly waits upon its God.

Behold, Lord, I resign myself entirely unto Thee, deal with Thy servant as seemeth good unto Thee. I desire to do nothing but according to Thy will, wish for nothing but Thyself, and I would ask for nothing but the will, the wish, the power of serving Thee better all the remaining days of my life. And in the world to come, Lord, grant me a place near Thee, under Thy feet, anywhere, that I may enjoy that beatific vision for which my soul longs and thirsts, even as the hart which desireth the water brooks.

Be Thou, Lord, within me to strengthen me, without me to guard me, over me to shelter me, beneath me to establish me, before me to guide me, after me to forward me, round about me to secure me.

Friday after Trinity Sunday.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.—St. John, iii. 14, 15.



QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord my God ; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

How honoured is Nicodemus ! not only does our gracious Lord vouchsafe to declare to him the gift of the Spirit in baptism, but He proceeds to shew him a glimpse of the source of all spiritual life—the cross ! I remember that the serpent was the origin of all sin ; that the children of Israel were bitten by serpents while in the wilderness : Moses by the commandment of God lifted up a brazen serpent, and those who looked thereon were healed. Even so, we children of the first Adam are wandering in the wilderness of this world, are bitten by the deadly serpents of sin ; the eternal Son of God took upon Him the likeness of sinful flesh, and was lifted up on the cross—we look on Him and are healed.

Rejoice, O my soul, that thou art become a member and child of that second Adam ; that thou art washed and gifted with the Holy Spirit in thy baptism, and that now thou canst raise thine eyes to the cross in full faith that He Who is there lifted up, and hath there poured out His soul unto death, hath power to raise thee from the death of sin to

the life of righteousness, and finally to bring thee to eternal life. Believe, therefore, for thou hearest what will be the reward of thy belief. But let thy belief bring forth fruits meet for the repentance thou owest unto thy Lord. Lift up thine eyes unto the cross. Cast down and leave upon the earth all things belonging to the earth ; all infirmities of the flesh and of the spirit ; thy besetting sin ; all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness ; the lust of the flesh ; the lust of the eyes ; the pride of life ; every motion of body and spirit contrary to His holy will ; and lift up thyself unto thy Lord. Set thy affections on things above ; fasten thyself unto His cross ; be with Him in every word and work, and thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life.

I must needs love Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, with my whole heart, with my whole soul, with my whole strength ; and follow Thy steps, that hast vouchsafed to die for me. And how can this be wrought in me but by Thee ? Let my soul cleave unto Thee, for all its strength hangeth upon Thee.


And now, O Lord my Redeemer, I adore Thee as very God, I trust in Thee, I hope in Thee, and with all the desire in my power, I pant after Thee : help my imperfections. Bless God thy Saviour, O my soul, and magnify His Name for ever. *Amen.*



Saturday after Trinity Sunday.

Should not perish, but have eternal life.

St. John, iii. 15.

UICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord my God ; give me Thy Holy Spirit, that all my doings, and especially the meditation on which I am entering, may be profitable unto me and acceptable unto Thee.

I must consider that here I have no abiding city. This world is not my home ; I am journeying onward, and daily taking my course, each day more decidedly than the last, towards everlasting perdition or eternal life. In a moment, when I least expect it, this life may be over ; eternity will be before me. Will it be a happy or a miserable eternity ?

There are two habitations in the world to come ; one an abode of misery, of death, of chains, of fire and brimstone, of groans and agonies ; the other, a place of bliss, of tranquillity, of verdure and of dew, of joys unspeakable and full of glory.

Choose, my soul, to which of these desirest thou to go. If thou desire heaven, believe in Jesus, and walk in the paths which lead to heaven, clothed in the robe of righteousness, and taking heed that thy faith bring forth fruit worthy of thy high calling. If thou shouldst walk in the way to hell, thou wilt soon find thyself there ; the works of the flesh, if thou indulgest thyself in them, will bring thee in time to their father, the devil.

If, therefore, thou wouldst be saved, keep eternal life always before thee. If thou art continually

meditating on eternity, thou wilt not become attached to the goods of this world.

Endeavour so to regulate all thy actions that they may be so many steps towards heaven. Mark well thy going ; one false step may lose thee. Thy way may seem heavy, and the prospect oftentimes dark, but thou knowest not what bliss may suddenly rise upon thee, and if thou keep Jesus always in sight, thou art sure not to lose thy way.

O God, Thou hast the words of eternal life. Henceforth I will live only to Thee. Hitherto I have lived for myself, and have lost Thee my sovereign good ; I beseech Thee let me never more lose Thee, but let me believe in Thee, serve Thee, and love Thee for evermore. *Amen.*



First Sunday after Trinity.

Beloved, let us love one another : for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.—1 John, iv. 7.

COME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration ; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through Jesus Christ.

If I consider the nature of love, I continually go back to God, Who is the true source and origin of love. He is the fountain from whence springs an immensity and boundless depth of love, which no poor human reason can fathom. How is it possible to understand the extent of a love which has done such things for those who are continually casting

aside and despising His gifts ; of a love, which gave His only Son to suffer such things, for so ungrateful a race! Love is the greatest gift that God can bestow on us; Himself is love. It does the work of all other graces, for love can compass anything, and will endeavour after anything for the beloved object. It is a grace which loves God for Himself, and our neighbour for His sake. The consideration of God's goodness, and of all the graces and benefits which He showers down upon us may be, and *is* commonly, the beginning of love to Him; but having once tasted the sweetness of that love, we proceed to love Him for Himself; we pass from passion to reason, from thinking to adoring, from sense to spirit, from being wrapt up in ourselves to union with God. What a picture is this! and how is it possible to attain to so great a height of love? Consider, my soul, how thou mayest arrive at this state, when thy hopes will be centred on God, thy wishes all tend to the One Object, and thy prayers will be the fervent communion and never ending intercourse between thee and thy God.

Consider, that love does all things that may please the beloved object. The great instance of our love that God requires of us, is, that we keep His commandments.

Love seeks out all secret intimations and signals of His pleasure Whom we love. Love gives all things, so as to advance the interests of the Beloved, and it suffers all things imposed by Him, not only quietly, but cheerfully and willingly. Love attaches itself to the friends, and wishes to serve all those who are interesting to the Beloved, and herein we perceive the well-spring of love to our neighbour, which is therefore a necessary attendant on love to God.

Love endeavours to be ever present with the Be-

loved ; it clings to all the instances of His goodness, repeats the stories of His greatness, and is never happy but when contemplating His perfections. Thus are all accidents, pain, grief, disappointments, made easy ; love smooths all ; the will of the Beloved is a sufficient reason why each cross should be embraced and welcomed, as if it were a crown of glory, or a bed of roses.

But remember, O my soul, that even in thy love there is danger ; thy holiest things are liable to the taint of thy humanity. Be careful thy love be sweet, full of tranquillity, of holy calm ; subject to no gusts of passion and no lullings of tepidity. Let it, as a lamp well trimmed, burn brightly, steadily, casting a light all around, and shedding the lustre of its pure rays upon thy thoughts, thy words, thy deeds, and on these more especially in thy conduct towards thy brethren.

LORD, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle : or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill ?

Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life : and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour : and hath not slandered his neighbour.

He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes : and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.


He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not : though it were to his own hindrance.

He that hath not given his money upon usury : nor taken reward against the innocent.

Whoso doeth these things : shall never fall.

Monday after First Sunday.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.—1 John, iv. 11.

OME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this and all my doings may be acceptable through Jesus Christ.

“If God so loved us,” means that He evinced the very greatest possible love in sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The remembrance of this inestimable benefit will inflame and increase my love to God, as I, by constant self-examination and watchfulness, discover daily more and more how greatly I stand in need of a Redeemer. This love to God will cause me to love all those to whom God has shewed His love, and in every person I behold, however poor, however wretched, I shall see one whose soul is so loved by God, that He sent His only begotten Son to redeem it from everlasting death.

This remembrance will always make me bitterly grieve to witness sin, or the effects of sin, in my neighbour; it will cause me to rejoice over those who are walking in the steep and narrow path which leadeth to eternal life.

The love to one's neighbour can never be a passive and theoretic love. Love is ever active, seeking to benefit those beloved, in every possible manner. Acts of charity or love to my neighbour may be of so many different kinds, that I must endeavour to

bring them clearly before my mind for the purpose of ascertaining how far I am in the habit of practising or leaving undone any of those which are most important. There are two sorts of charity, temporal and spiritual. The temporal acts are, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to redeem captives, to visit the sick, to entertain strangers, and to bury the dead.

These works of mercy are some of them not likely to be required from me, others will always be of daily occurrence. And take heed, my soul, that thou turn not thy face from any poor man; remember also always so to give thine alms, that thou mayest see in thy poor brother the representative of Him who became poor for his sake and thine. These instances of temporal works of mercy are only broadly stated, and must be subdivided and carried out into various other branches.

The spiritual works of mercy are very numerous; these are a few of them:—

To teach the ignorant; to counsel the doubtful; to admonish sinners, diligently, seasonably, and kindly; to encourage others to good works; to comfort the afflicted; to pardon offenders; to succour and support the weak; to pray for all estates of men, and for relief of their necessities; to be gentle and charitable in speaking of the defects of others; not to offend a weak brother.

In all these instances both of temporal and spiritual works of mercy, thou feelest thyself below that mark, which is the standard of Christian perfection; but thou must perceive that the defect which is most insidious, and which creeps in almost unawares, is that of speaking unfavourably and flippantly of others; not only in speaking of their faults, but in using disparaging language of them. Is this what


ought to be the conduct of a disciple of the God Who is love? No, I sorrowfully confess that my soul is not so entirely filled with love as becomes one for whom the Eternal Son came into the world, gave such an example of untiring and perfect love and mercy, and died such an agonizing death to free us from the curse of the law. O give me Thy love, most loving Saviour, that I may love my neighbour in Thee, and Thee for Thine own self; and let it be in me the very bond of peace and of all perfection; grant it, Lord, I humbly beseech Thee! *Amen.*



Tuesday after First Sunday.

*Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God,
God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*

St. John, iv. 15.

OME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this, and all my doings, may be acceptable through Jesus Christ.

These words suggest to me to examine my faith, lest on so important a subject I should be led either into error, or by carelessness let go any portion of that truth which is of such vital importance.

To confess a belief, means not only to pronounce the words, or to carry a bare intellectual assent to the doctrine, but to make my outward actions correspond to the convictions of my mind, and thus witness to them.

The Church, in her tender care for her children, has provided a confession of our faith in the blessed and only Saviour, declaring that it is necessary to eternal salvation that we believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; and going on to say that the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

Perfect God and perfect Man : equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead, inferior to the Father, as touching His manhood.

My soul, this is a vast mystery, but thou must bend thy finite capacity to God's infinitewisdom, and meekly believe what He has so graciously revealed. This belief in thy blessed and only Saviour must not rest here; thou must indeed believe, but what are to be the fruits of this belief?

Thou seest the eternal Son of God, begotten before the world, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, sitting at the right hand of the Father from all eternity. Thou wilt adore the greatness of His glory, the height of His Majesty. Thou seest Him descended from His Father's throne, emptied of all His glory, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being born of a poor maid, suffering all the miseries of humanity. Behold, O my soul, His humility, and become humbled thyself after so great a pattern.

Thou seest Him wandering about, not having where to lay His head; wearied, hungry, thirsty, yet ever labouring for the good of mankind. Adore, my soul, His patience, His long-suffering, His meekness, His mercy, His love; and endeavour to become patient, long-suffering, meek, merciful, and loving, after so great a pattern.

Thou seest Him despised, accused, forsaken, spit

upon, buffeted, scourged, crucified ! Fall down and kneel before the Saviour Who died for thy sins, and endeavour to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts ; bury thy sins in His grave, and O ! endeavour to rise with Him to newness of life. How can this prospect but produce in thee such a lively faith as will indeed cause thee to purify thyself, that thou mayest become a temple fitted for the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit ! Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief ; O Lord, my Redeemer and only Saviour Jesus Christ, I beseech Thee, increase my faith.

By the mystery of Thy holy incarnation ; by Thy holy nativity and circumcision ; by Thy baptism, fasting, and temptation ; by Thine agony and bloody sweat ; by Thy cross and passion ; by Thy precious death and burial ; by Thy glorious resurrection and ascension ; good Lord deliver me.



Wednesday after First Sunday.

There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear.—1 John, iv. 18.

COME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration ; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this, and all my doings, may be acceptable through Jesus Christ.

Why do I fear God ? Why should I fear and shrink from the thought of seeing Him, supposing that now, even at this moment, He were to come

to judge the world? I know Him to be all-merciful, most tender, most loving; yea, but I also know Him to be all-seeing, most pure, and most just. I am a sinful creature, and when I think upon God, and love Him with all my heart, soul, and strength, though I see all His divine perfections, yet I look upon myself, and, like Adam, when he had transgressed and fallen, I see myself to be naked, naked of every good work; I therefore cannot help, I must fear God, because of my sinfulness, because of my imperfections; I must fear whilst the least spot of sin, the slightest soil, remains in me. Why do I not cast aside all imperfection? I love God, I desire to serve Him, and I would gladly arrive at that perfect love which casteth out fear. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and I daily have to bewail that the good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. I thank God, Who has provided a propitiation for me,—Jesus Christ the Righteous,—for without the washing out of the stains of my sins by His most precious blood, I cannot hope to be saved.

How canst thou, O my soul, cultivate the perfection of love, which casteth out fear? thou must pray earnestly for grace to help thee on in thy warfare. The struggle gets daily more severe; the devil relaxes not his hold without many attempts to retain thee in his power. Examine most rigidly thy conduct every day, and every day set thyself a fresh task; go on from strength to strength, until the time shall arrive when thy warfare shall be accomplished. Then thou shalt be brought before thy Judge, thou shalt have thy garments washed in the blood of the Lamb, thy love shall be made perfect, no fear will thenceforth come near thee, but thou shalt live in the presence of Him Whom thou lovest with a per-

fect love, the enjoyment of Whose presence is perfection of bliss.

O Lord, give me the grace of perseverance, that I fall not away from Thee or relax in my endeavours after Thee. Uphold me, O Lord, by Thy mighty power, and grant that, loving Thee above all things, I may attain Thy gracious promises, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Thursday after First Sunday.

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.—St. Luke, xvi. 19-21.



OME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this, and all my doings, may be acceptable through Jesus Christ.

What a contrast is here given between the rich and the poor! the rich man surrounded by every luxury and comfort, clothed with magnificence, and fed with every dainty that could excite his appetite, and minister to his enjoyment; the beggar, houseless, laid at the gate of the rich man, full of sores, and so helpless, that he could not drive away the

dogs which came about him; he was also hungry, for he desired to be fed with the leavings of the rich man's table.

There is no particular sin attributed to the rich man, he is not blamed for being rich, nor for using his riches for his own pleasure; neither is the poor man praised for any particular virtue, although the end shews that he possessed such virtue, though it was hidden under a miserable and disgusting exterior.

There must have been some connection between these men, or they would not have been named together, neither would the condition of the one have entailed such a responsibility upon the other.

God, in His providential arrangements, had so placed the poor man that in becoming nigh to, or neighbour to, the rich man, that rich man had certain duties to perform with respect to him. How did he perform those duties? The richly-clad, the well-fed, the luxurious man, allowed the miserable, the impotent, the hungry man to lie at his gate, that gate which ought to have been a type of his heart, open; with good things passing and repassing to and fro; and yet he ministered not to him, but left the offices of kindness to be performed by dogs; thereby shewing that brute beasts are to be preferred before the sensual, selfish man, who, though guilty of no *crime*, commonly so called, *omits* to do his duty to his neighbour. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The rich man fulfilled not this command, and the sequel shews that a fearful retribution awaits those who break this commandment.

My soul, think not because thou art not rich according to the common meaning of the word, this parable contains no warning to thee. Pause and

consider that sins of omission are specially pointed at in this part of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. God has given thee many things richly to enjoy; is there no poor beggar at thy gate, longing to be a partaker of some of thy privileges and blessings? Dost thou withhold any comfort from a poor brother to whom thou mightest administer of thine abundance? Dost thou, for instance, go frequently to church, and dost thou forget thy () whose duties oblige him to remain at home, unless some one relieve him, and take his place? He is the beggar at thy gate; endanger not thy soul by refusing that for which he longs. Dost thou hear of a sick person to whom a short conversation, a little reading, would be an unspeakable comfort? He is the beggar at thy gate, give him that for which he asks, though it be to thy inconvenience, and thou shalt not lose thy reward. Never omit anything that may be of either profit or innocent pleasure to those around thee. Kind looks, kind words, a gentle reproof, a small alms, (if no more is in thy power,) and at all events thy strength, thy time, thy talents, may be employed for those who are around thee; for each person who is brought near to thee, be it friend, sister, mother, husband, child, servant, stranger, or enemy, in turn may be the beggar at thy gate.

Grant me, O Lord, grace to discern all the duties and responsibilities by which I am surrounded; give me an entire forgetfulness of self, and a great love for the brethren around me; increase my charity, and my power of usefulness; and may my conduct be such, that it may shew forth my love and my adoration of Thee by the care and zeal with which I serve my neighbour. *Amen.*

Friday after First Sunday.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom ; the rich man also died, and was buried.

St. Luke, xvi. 22.



OME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspiration ; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections, and sanctify all my faculties, that this, and all my doings, may be acceptable unto my heavenly Lord.

The poor man spent his life in misery, his body was diseased ; his mind was however set upon things above, and when his soul ceased to inhabit its miserable tenement of flesh, it was precious in the sight of God ; He commanded the angels to carry it to its place of rest, there to remain until the great day of judgment,—Abraham's bosom ! How sweet the repose that the soul of the poor sufferer must have enjoyed in that place of rest and refreshment, after the miserable hours spent at the gate of the rich man, where his sufferings were so great that even dogs had pity on him and licked his sores !

But the rich man ; what a blank is here ! he died, and was buried. Here are no angels, no bosom open to receive him ; but he went to the place prepared for him. My soul, thou art often exceeding heavy ; the cares of this world often press upon thee ; thou hast to provide for a family ; and thy bodily health is sometimes so impaired as to make life a burden to thee.

What a comfort under the troubles, sorrows and distresses of this life, to think upon Abraham's

bosom ! to reflect that, if thou bear thy cross as a faithful servant of thy Lord, when thou art parted from this corruptible flesh, angels will carry thee unto Abraham's bosom, to that place of rest and refreshment, of calm and tranquillity, and of sweet repose, where thou wilt await in peace thy Lord's coming. O how great an encouragement to bear patiently all the evils of this life, to remember the peace and joys awaiting the toil-worn soldiers of the cross !

Remember, O my soul, when thou art tempted to repine at thy trials, remember the angels ; think on Abraham's bosom ; think on thy Lord Who purchased these great mercies for thee ; adore thy God Who has provided so blessed an escort, so divine a resting place, on thy way to the full enjoyment of that bliss which He has prepared for those Who love Him.

Lord, I am not fit, I am not worthy of all Thy mercies. Lord, make me more thankful, more worthy ; lay any cross upon me, so that I may finally rest with Thee, and grant me Thy grace to stand against all temptations, and to be ready to suffer all things so that I may win Christ. *Amen.*

O HOW amiable are Thy dwellings : Thou Lord of hosts !

My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her a house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young : even Thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house : they will be always praising Thee.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee : in whose heart are Thy ways.

Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well : and the pools are filled with water.

They will go from strength to strength : and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer : hearken, O God of Jacob.

Behold, O God our defender : and look upon the face of Thine Anointed.

For one day in Thy courts : is better than a thousand.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God : than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

For the Lord God is a light and defence : the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall He withhold from them that live a godly life.

O Lord God of hosts : blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Thee.



Saturday after First Sunday.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren ; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

St. Luke, xvi. 27, 28.



OME Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, and visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant with Thy heavenly inspirations ; illuminate my understanding, inflame my affections,

and sanctify all my faculties, that this, and all my doings, may be acceptable unto my heavenly Lord.

The rich man being in torments, and finding no relief to his miserable condition, bitterly thinks over his past life; he calls to mind all the sins and errors he had committed; he thinks of the different passages of his life in which he ought to have acted differently; he counts over his privileges set aside, his blessings misused and abused. He then calls to mind those with whom he lived; he thinks of all, near and dear to him, and he ardently wishes that they knew of his condition; for if they did, they would repent, and not come into that place of torments.

But no, his request is refused; those five brethren have ample means of ascertaining and knowing the truth, they have direct revelations of the Holy Spirit, and if they believe not in them, they would not be converted though a special miracle were wrought for that purpose. This sounds almost impossible, but the very case happened, and it was so; they believed not. The chief priests knew that Lazarus had been raised from the dead, and yet they consulted to rid themselves of him.

Our blessed Lord Himself; He rose from the dead; did all believe in Him afterwards? No; they wilfully blinded themselves; no miracle will convince those who wilfully sin in the midst of light and against the light.

How dreadful is the responsibility of those who go on sinning against the light! and how great is the responsibility of those, who, having light, neglect to impart it to those who are their brethren! It will add to the torments of the wicked to remember that it is through their fault that their

brethren are not awakened to a sense of their guilt and of their danger. My soul, remember thy brethren, while there is yet time, and leave no means untried of bringing them out of darkness into light ; bring all those who are near and dear to thee to the foot of the cross, and by earnest prayer before the Throne of Grace, endeavour to bring down upon them the blessing of Almighty God ; and if ever this duty appear irksome or difficult, remember the rich man in the parable, whose misery was so much increased by the remembrance of his five erring brethren.

This is not enough ; thou must take special heed to those who are brought near to thee by ties of blood. Thou canst not tell how far thy responsibility extends. It will be fearful at the day of judgment to hear that a careless word spoken by thee, has occasioned or encouraged a life of sin for which a soul is about to be cast into hell ; how much more, if that soul be of thine own kindred ! O, endeavour to look upon all persons as immortal souls, whose salvation in some way depends upon thy conduct ; it will give thee great tenderness towards others ; will cause thee to look with pity on their failings ; will give thee great concern, as to thy conversation among them, and will make thee humbly anxious to assist them in working out their salvation.



Second Sunday after Trinity.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ?—1 St. John, iii. 17.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable to Thyself.

Love is the constant theme of the beloved disciple; how tender, how touching, are his appeals for man; how sublime and elevating are his thoughts and expressions with respect to God! God is love; he that loveth not, knoweth not God.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and hereby we perceive the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. Could I lay down my life for any one? Do I love any one sufficiently to go through the agonies and torture of a painful death for his sake? Perhaps there might be found some who love with intensity enough to lay down their lives for that beloved person. But those for whom our Lord laid down His life, are they all loving, and docile, and obedient to do all things according to His will? Speak for thyself, O my soul, art thou conformed to the perfect pattern of love and obedience set thee by thy God? No; thou must sorrowfully confess that in many ways thou offendest. Thou must seek to improve thyself, and especially in this important matter of love. Thou must cultivate, by every possible measure, by every possible sign, thy love to God, and

thy love to men. Now, the poor are especially Christ's representatives on earth, and to them, therefore, thou must open more widely the portals of thine heart.

"Shutting up the bowels of compassion," is an admirable description of the cold, suspicious, calculating manner in which thou meetest the poor who have to beg thee to minister to them of thine abundance. Avoid these manners and this feeling; let thy first impulse be one of tenderness and compassion; let not thy looks freeze the pitiful story of the poor beggar before it passes his lips; but look kindly upon him, enter into his woes, feel for his sufferings, and relieve him according to his wants and thy power, and even beyond thy power; for a meal made scanty by the devotion of a large share to a poor brother, will bring a larger blessing unto thee than abundance of meat eaten to the sound of cries for help.

Thou must avoid in this, as in all other things, the injudicious application of thy means; and the labour required to search into the claims of the poor, is an excellent addition to alms given in God's name and for God.

O Lord, grant that I may love all men, and do good to those in need. Let me love, not in word only, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth; and grant that my feelings of love and compassion to my poorer brethren may be the test and sign that I am walking in the truth, and may give me greater confidence in approaching Thy throne of grace.

BLESSED is the man that feareth the Lord :
he hath great delight in His commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth : the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.

Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house :
and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the
darkness : he is merciful, loving, and righteous.

A good man is merciful, and lendeth : and will
guide his words with discretion.

For he shall never be moved : and the righteous
shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

He will not be afraid of any evil tidings : for his
heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord.

His heart is established, and will not shrink :
until he see his desire upon his enemies.

He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the
poor : and his righteousness remaineth for ever ;
his horn shall be exalted with honour.

The ungodly shall see it, and it shall grieve him :
he shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away ;
the desire of the ungodly shall perish.



Monday after Second Sunday.

*For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our
heart, and knoweth all things.*

I St. John, iii. 20.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire
of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole
self, and especially this my humble effort,
which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto
Thyself.

God, in His infinite care and kindness has planted
in our bosoms a monitor to give us warning of our
deeds, whether they be good or evil. This inward
voice, conscience, keeps constant note of our doings,

and gives the alarm when anything goes contrary to the known laws of God; this knowledge comes through our reason. The voice of the soul becomes louder and more distinct by cultivation; and consequently, it may be deadened and entirely silenced by disregard. The sinner goes on committing iniquity, the voice is silent; and unless he is awakened by some sudden conviction, by some messenger sent by God for his conversion, the inward monitor has ceased to speak, he becomes utterly reprobate, dead to everything but sin. God grant that it may not be so with me! God grant unto me a tender conscience, a heart easily softened and turned from error!

I find that it takes a long, very long time, to know myself. I keep a strict watch; my conscience I fervently hope grows more alive, for each day I discover some error, or some tendency to error, which requires watching, so that my spiritual warfare grows daily more arduous. It is like that of an army, which at first engages with the adversary far off, using large weapons to destroy masses of the enemy; and then engages hand to hand in a personal and desperate struggle; seeking to wrest the weapon from the enemy's hand, and to inflict deadly wounds upon his person. Even so in my conflict with my sins; one is overcome; another starts up, and is quelled; and then a third, which has never been seen before, rises; then perhaps an old sin, which I had imagined had been long ago exterminated, appears again. O how wearisome is the struggle! how hard the victory! but the glorious, glorious prize! how well worth is it of all, yea, and of double and treble what it can cost me! But, my soul, thou must be diligent in thy endeavours at self-knowledge; seek into every corner of

thy conscience, leave not a thought untried, for if thou art careless and leavest one spot, one defect, there is One Who searcheth the hearts; He is greater than our hearts; He knoweth all things, and He will require a strict account of the reason why that one defect was left to spoil thy beauty.

Thou must look well that thy will is wholly bent on serving God, that thy intention is pure; the moment thy will becomes weak, thy intention will fail, and thou canst then have no more confidence towards God; for God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things.

O Lord, I look up to Thee, hoping for Thy mercy; make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; grant that whatsoever I ask of Thee I may receive in Thy own good time! and now, O God, I ask of Thee grace and strength to keep Thy commandments, and a clear spiritual perception of the working of my own soul. Grant this for the sake of Jesus, my Lord and Saviour.
Amen.



Tuesday after Second Sunday.

And they all with one consent began to make excuse.
St. Luke, xiv. 18.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

How extraordinary it appears, that when a very great privilege is held out, it is not seized upon with

eagerness ! that "with one consent" we try to make excuses for holding back from what reason and revelation both point out as conveying special advantages and blessings ! I think now of the manner in which I and many others try to evade the performance of religious duties ; not that I am unaware of the duty, and the advantage, and even of the pleasure of their performance ; the men in the parable might consider it an honour to receive the invitation of the rich man, and they would be aware of many pleasures awaiting them at the great supper ; but they had other duties to perform, which they either preferred, or fancied would be more to their advantage than supping with this "certain man."

I am "invited," or elected to many privileges and blessings, my "excuses" are many for omitting, or not appreciating those privileges and blessings. As a member of Christ, as one of that holy and mystical Body, of which the Head has ascended up on high, do I not oftentimes by ill-regulated actions, by unrestrained thoughts, by unbridled words, mar the purity of the body ? do I not often forget the presence of the blessed Head, and when a sense of these misdeeds comes upon me do I not make excuses, and say of each offence, "Is it not a little one ?" As a child of God, am I not often forgetful of my heavenly Father ; do I not "make excuses" for not attending at the holy services in His house, and when I do attend, am I not often a disobedient child, and allow my thoughts to wander from the great Object of my adoration and love, and do I not "make excuses" of various kinds, something having occurred to distract my thoughts,—it is hot, or it is cold (). And above all, do I not make excuses sometimes, when His table is made

ready for all the faithful and penitent to partake of the blessed sacrament of His Body and Blood? Are there no "yokes of oxen," no "pieces of ground" which stand between me and the performance of the direct command of my heavenly Father?

But further, as an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, do I not allow the world to get too fast a hold upon me! do no worldly objects stand between me and the heavenly country to which I am invited, and of which I am a citizen, if only I do not make excuses and set up my rest here, fixing my mind on earthly things instead of pressing forward to heaven?

Take heed, O my soul, how thou excusest thyself in the most trifling fault; much better it is to humble thyself and confess that in many ways thou offendest, than to get into the habit of palliating or excusing small errors; for as habits always grow, unless checked and stopped, thou wilt soon find thyself making excuses for not doing the bidding of Him Who invites thee to His heavenly feast; thou mayest in the end say, "I pray Thee have me excused," when thou art bidden to His supper; thy own employment, meantime, being merely to increase thy worldly wealth, or thy temporal happiness.



Wednesday after Second Sunday.

Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.—St. Luke, xiv. 23.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

The chosen people of God, I well know, rejected all His offers of grace—"His own received Him not." He then extended His invitations and messages of mercy to the Gentiles, to those living in the city; still there is room—room for whom?—even for those whom we, in our exclusive pride and ignorance, think too degraded and too miserable for such a favour. He sends into the highways and hedges for those who have lived a life of sin, to the spiritually destitute, the maimed in soul, those who have been living in the highways of iniquity, and the hedges of all sin and impurity; to these God in His infinite mercy sends His messenger, who, preaching the glad tidings of repentance, and faith, and mercy, compels them to come in and to partake of the free, unmerited, and unrestrained gifts of God. This ought to make me very lenient and fearful of judging others. I see persons walking in careless forgetfulness of God, and apparently of all goodness; but they have souls to be saved; I must not turn in horror from the marks of sin which they carry about them, but I must regard their present condition with compassion, and I must remember that though I have an invitation from the Lord, I

may possibly be weak enough to make an excuse ; and that to those persons who are now walking in the highways and hedges, God's messenger may be sent, and they may be compelled to come in ; they may even be called up higher, and I, remembering with shame my scornful thoughts, with great confusion may begin to take the lowest room.

These thoughts should make me very careful, O my soul, in judging and condemning others ; it should also make thee very zealous in promoting the spread of Gospel tidings in the world. All God's appointed ministers are the servants to whom He commits His invitations to His supper ; these ministers, be they bishops, priests, or deacons, be they placed in town or country, at home or abroad, are His messengers ; and to them devolves the task of going into the streets and lanes of the city, to the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, and to the highways and hedges, to compel them to come in ; that is to say, to force them to repentance, to inspire them with faith, to give them a knowledge of God, to shew them the cross, and to draw them with cords of love to accept the gracious invitations of their God. Be very earnest therefore, O my soul, in thy prayers for God's ministers ; they require great, yea, supernatural strength for the work in which they are engaged. Thy poor prayers are most needful ; pray for them, unworthy as thou art, as if God's blessing depended upon thy asking ; do also all that is in thy power for those engaged in foreign missions ; they are indeed gone into the highways of the earth. May God bless their labours, may they compel all the heathens to come in !

Thursday after Second Sunday.

So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

Judges, iv. 23.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

It had been a hard fought battle, and the captain of the defeated army fled from the face of the enemy. Tired and exhausted, he reached the tent of one who had not mingled in the fray, Heber the Kenite. Jael, the wife of Heber, welcomed the exhausted man; she bade him enter, she gave him milk, and covered him, that he might refresh his weariness by sleep. When Jael saw Sisera sleeping, and felt the possibility of ridding her people of the daring enemy who molested them, her woman's soul became stern as that of an undaunted warrior. I may imagine that she beheld in the sleeping man, the enemy of her people and of her God, and that she lifted up her heart in one brief but earnest prayer, that her weak hand might be instrumental in exterminating this deadly foe; she struck the nail into his temples, and fastened him to the ground,—so he died. Thus God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

Let me consider this, and regard Jabin the king of Canaan, and Sisera the captain of his host, as types of all the enemies of God; of all the sins and wickedness which fight against the children of Israel,

even against those elected and chosen out of the world into God's holy Church.

This Jabin, king of Canaan, and Sisera, mightily oppressed the children of Israel, so they cried unto the Lord; even so we cry unto the Lord, being tied and bound by the chain of our sins, and we beseech Him by the pitifulness of His mercy to loose us. The children of Israel fight against the host, and they defeat it; but the captain flies, and is still at large, he enters the tent of a woman, and is entirely subdued and killed. We may fight against the host of open enemies and subdue them, but there is one great besetting sin, which comes in unto us, and which we nourish and feed, which requires the undivided exertion of each for himself, to kill. God has given us here an encouraging example of how even the weakest means may subdue the strongest foe,—blessed be His holy Name!

My soul, when thou art tempted to shrink from the conflict with that besetting sin, which enters into thy secret chamber,—is so familiar, and even demands some sympathy from thee from the circumstances under which it comes unto thee,—remember Jael; pity it not; fetch thy weapons, seek not for sword or spear, but use the commonest instruments, the first thing that comes to thy hand, to exterminate thy deadly foe; use them in God's name, and He will subdue for thee both thy besetting enemy, and also the whole host of the king of Canaan.

But ever remember, that it is not thine own arm that helpeth thee, but His right hand and His arm, and the light of His countenance, because He has a favour unto thee. How can God have a favour unto a sinful creature like thee, O my soul? it is even because thou hast a Mediator; He makes continual intercession for thee; it is Christ Who has pur-

chased that favour; it is the Blood of the Cross that has purchased that redemption, without which the hand would have been powerless, and the hammer and the nail could never have done their work of extermination.



Friday after Second Sunday.

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.—Judges, v. 23.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

Here is a fearful curse passed upon those, who, instead of bestirring themselves in the service of the Lord, were slothful; they are not stated to have done wrong, only to have left undone what it was their duty to do. These do the angel of the Lord curse bitterly; it appears as if they shrunk from going to the help of the Lord's cause, on account of the mighty; that is, because the enemies of the Lord were mighty. Thus they added cowardice to sloth, and truly deserved the curse which was heaped upon them.

Let me remember that the inhabitants of Meroz were individuals; each had a separate responsibility; they each and all incurred the anger of the Lord, and they were all included in one collective curse.

Let me remember also, that when Abraham in-

terceded with the Lord for the cities of the plain, the Lord promised to spare them for the sake of fifty, forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, ten;—for the sake of a little knot of righteous men, those guilty cities would have been given to the prayers of the faithful Abraham, and we cannot doubt but that the same would have been the case with Meroz. And what ought this to teach me? As a member of a nation, I have an individual responsibility in the national acts. I must not consider myself too mean or too humble to set an example, and to do all I can, both for the morals and the religion of my country. It is a great idea, but still I am permitted to entertain it, that I can come to the help of the Lord. To help the Lord! O how ought I to strive that I may attain such a high honour—I, a poor, weak individual, seemingly fit for nothing but to cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” Still, in the various duties of life, in the self-denial exhibited in the several claims and ties around me, I, the Lord’s soldier, signed with His sign, always girt about with His spiritual armour, if always declaring myself on the Lord’s side, can ever come to the help of the Lord against His enemies.

Strengthen me, O Lord! with heavenly courage, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, and the earthly mind, not as yet fully subject to the Spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which it will be needful for me to fight, as long as I breathe in this mortal life.



Saturday after Second Sunday.

The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming?—Judges, v. 28.

KINDLE in my heart, O Lord, the holy fire of Thy love. I offer unto Thee my whole self, and especially this my humble effort, which I beseech Thee to make acceptable unto Thyself.

The picture here presented to the imagination is very striking. The mother of Sisera, with all a mother's anxiety for the safety of her son, and conscious that he had been engaged in a dangerous enterprise, looks out from the window for some sign of his returning chariot; she calls from the lattice, such is her impatience to know why he is so long in returning. Her ladies answer her, as those in suspense are wont to do, by suggesting doubts; they shew that the object of the expedition was to get spoil. Amid all their anxiety they thought not, they spoke not, of higher things, their minds were set on worldly objects: such is always the case with the enemies of the Lord, and we may say with Deborah, "So let all Thine enemies perish, O Lord!"

This shews the state of mind of those who are styled by our Saviour, the "children of the world;" they seek not after God, neither is God in all their thoughts. Yet how vain is all this earnestness after worldly things! The mother of Sisera, when bending over the dead body of her son, must have felt that all the goodly spoil was useless! How gladly

would she have exchanged all those glittering vanities for one word of comfort, for one hope, sent from the world beyond the grave.

My soul, be warned that this world will profit thee nothing for eternity; therefore set not thy heart upon it, neither trust in uncertain riches; let not anything in the world or of the world be thy stay. Thou wilt say, But God has sent me all things richly to enjoy; true it is, that God has sent all these things for thy use, but thou art in a state of probation, and as thou usest them so shalt thou be judged at the last day. Partake and use all things as the gifts of a loving Father, but instead of loving them, love Him, the great Giver of all good gifts. As thou growest in love to God thou wilt lose thy relish for all things but Himself, and as heaven and heavenly objects grow more familiar to thee, thou wilt lose sight of this world, thou wilt then look for, and long after, thy Lord's appearing. Thou wilt pant to be joined in everlasting union with Him, and like the mother of Sisera, thou wilt be ever looking out and exclaiming, Why is His chariot so long in coming! why tarry the wheels of His chariot? Even so, O Blessed Jesus, grant that I may indeed, with pure heart and clear conscience, hope and long for Thy blessed appearance.

*Third Sunday after Trinity.*

Be clothed with humility.—1 St. Peter, v. 5.



UICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

To be entirely covered with humility ; every thought, word, and action, to be enveloped in this Christian grace ; this should be the aim of all who seek to serve the Lord acceptably.

It requires the very greatest degree of self-knowledge to detect, in order to root out, all the lurking spots of pride which disfigure the soul ; a good opinion of one-self seems interwoven as it were with our very nature, but I believe that as I go on increasing in self-knowledge, I shall increase in humility. I see myself so faulty in every respect ; evil lurks in my best actions, and I am so prone to fall again into errors of which I fancied myself corrected ; and above all, I am so constantly acting without entire purity of motive, that I have every reason to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But, above all, the greatest reason for deep humility is the recollection of all that our Blessed Saviour did and suffered for me. Think upon Him, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

"But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ;

"And being formed in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

And why did He all this? Even for my sins. Can I then take pride in anything that I do? Can I do anything but deeply humble myself, when I consider that it took all this to wipe out my sins?

The greatest saints have always been the most humble ; let me, after their example, and according to the great pattern of humility set me by my Saviour, cultivate this grace, and endeavour that

my life and conversation may be modelled after so excellent an example.

Remember, O my soul, that whoso knoweth himself well, groweth more mean in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of men.

How much more thou knowest, and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unless thy life be also more holy.

It is often very profitable, to keep thee more humble, that others know and rebuke thy faults.

Endeavour constantly to perform acts of humility ; when others do not treat thee as becomes thy age, character or station, remember thy humble Saviour ; when thou seest persons inferior preferred before thee, remember thy humble Saviour ; always keep thyself in the background, and in so doing remember thy humble Saviour ; restrain thy thoughts, in comparing thyself with others ; remember thy humble Saviour.

Keep thyself low ; be mean in thine own eyes , beseech the Lord absolutely to dispose of thee ; and be contented to have thy good things evil spoken of, thy best actions misjudged, and thy best words misinterpreted. Suffer all this cheerfully as unto God, remembering that He resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who of Thy tender love towards mankind, has sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility ; mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of His patience, and also be made partakers of His resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Monday after Third Sunday.

Casting all our care upon Him, for He careth for you.—I St. Peter, v. 7.



QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

What comfortable words are these to the weary and heavy laden! This world is full of trouble, sorrow, and anxiety; for the most part we have to carry about a load of external cares; sometimes these cares are changed for sorrows, sometimes for personal sufferings; sometimes it is the consciousness of some sin; but there is always a weight which presses most heavily—the burden of sins both of omission and commission. All these burdens I may cast upon the Lord, for He careth for me. But as there is one sign by which I know that God careth for me, so there is but one place where I may ease myself of this load of care. There is one, the dearly beloved of His Father; that One is God; but for us He became Man; for us He hung upon the Cross, and poured out His precious blood to wash out the stains of our sins. That blood is the sign by which I know that He careth for us, and at the foot of that Cross may I lay down my heavy, heavy load; there may I lie down myself, trusting wholly to the ineffable mercy, which has given such a rest for my soul.

O my God, it is impossible to express—I can only feel—the divine rest, the complete repose to the soul, that this blessed assurance gives. I have One that careth for me, One Who can enter into

feelings which it is impossible to explain; a Friend to Whom I can pour out my overburdened soul when oppressed by sorrows or sins; a Physician Who can heal the diseases of soul and body; a Father to Whose care I can joyfully give up all the dear ones who have been so cherished upon earth; a Saviour who lovingly invites me to come unto Him, Who has redeemed my soul from hell, Who has washed me from my wickedness and cleansed me from my sin, Who now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, making continual intercession for me; a Comforter, Who sends down fresh supplies of grace, Who gives me strength for my journey, and Who will continue to me His constant aids, as long as I really and indeed cast my burden upon the Lord.

Whatever occurs to the mind as desirable must always be wished for and prayed for in the fear of God and with humility of heart; and we must commit the whole matter of our prayer to God, with special resignation of ourselves; and we must say, O Lord, Thou knowest what is best for us; let this or that be done as Thou pleasest. Give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt.

Deal with me as Thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth Thee, and is most for Thine honour.

Set me where Thou wilt, and deal with me in all things just as Thou wilt.

I am in Thy hand; turn me round, and turn me back again, which way soever Thou pleasest.

Behold, I am Thy servant, prepared for all things; for I desire not to live unto myself but unto Thee; and oh, that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

Tuesday after Third Sunday.

But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.—1 St. Peter, v. 10.



CUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

I must then suffer before I attain to the privileges of the Gospel; even so, Lord; let me not shrink from what Thou hast ordained, but give me courage to take up my cross, ever holding before me the prospect of those sufferings by which our Saviour Christ made us free. Let me not shrink from Thy protecting arm, but in all my dangers and tribulations, grant that I may cling close to Thee, not desiring to see my way through my troubles, but wishing to be guided by Thee into the safe resting place of Thy will. Thou canst do this, O God of grace; Thou hast called me unto eternal life by Thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ. O let Thy grace be sufficient for me; I will rejoice in being called to suffer tribulations, if only Thou wilt, by them, bring me nearer to Thee, that I may be made perfect by the constant contemplation of Thy ineffable perfections, and may receive supplies of grace to carry me forward; O may I go on from strength to strength, until I appear before Thee, the God of gods, in Zion!

But how can I talk of perfection and myself together? O Lord, behold me; is it not the greatest

presumption in me to talk of perfection? Behold, my trust is wholly and entirely in Thee; Thou takest the simple out of the dust, and liftest the poor out of the dunghill; Thou canst even perfect me, wretched miserable sinner that I am. And as I am sore let and hindered in running the race set before me, owing to the troublous times in which Thou hast set my life, oh, stablish me in Thy holy faith; make me strong and very courageous, and settle me in the true faith, on that rock which Thou hast ordained for ever; then may rain descend, floods come, and winds blow; I shall never be moved, for Thou, Lord, wilt have stablished, strengthened, settled me.

O my soul, fall down and worship thy Saviour, for having brought thee unto this state of salvation. He has purchased Thy salvation; thou knowest how dear it cost Him, and thou knowest that He now sits on the throne of glory, making continual intercession for thee. Let this be thy inducement to persevere: pray without ceasing to that merciful Saviour, and ask of Him to send down upon thee the strengthening, vivifying grace of His holy Spirit, to hold up thy goings in His paths; and finally, when thy garments have been made white in His precious blood, to place thee at His right hand, there to enjoy the pleasures of His kingdom for evermore.



Wednesday after Third Sunday.

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.—St. Luke, xv. 7.



WICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

Our blessed Lord is sitting in the house of a chief Pharisee. He discourses with divine wisdom, and instructs those who are willing to receive His doctrine. But the Scribes and Pharisees, blinded by their pride, perceive not, neither understand the drift of all His words and actions. They find fault that He keeps not Himself separate from sinners. Our blessed Lord, full of meek dignity, reproves these fault-finders by pronouncing the parable of the lost sheep; so applicable to them, so applicable in these times also. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; but there was once a good Shepherd, Who came into the wilderness of this world. How tenderly and patiently did He seek those who went astray! How does He still, through His appointed messengers, seek the lost ones; how gently and tenderly does He place them on His shoulder and carry them. He feeds them in the green pastures of His word, and leads them forth beside the cool refreshing streams of His grace. How tenderly ought I to love this divine Shepherd; how ought I to watch over, and care for, the soul which He has carried with Him and so tenderly watched over! But what a precious thing a soul must be! There is joy in heaven over one sinner that re-

penteth; the salvation of one soul causeth more rejoicing where God and the holy angels dwell in bliss and glory inconceivable, than the salvation of ninety and nine who have never departed from virtue.

My soul, thou knowest what it cost to redeem thee—even the sacrifice of God. O let this thought make thee very precious in thine own sight; thou art not thine own; thou art bought with a price; all thy actions must be regulated with this view; thou art precious thyself; others are precious also. Act as if thy example were to save thy brother's soul; make no excuses of false humility; thy good example may do much; thy evil example is sure to hinder the salvation of others; therefore act for thyself, and to thy brethren, with the constant remembrance that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Joy in that blest place, where it seems impossible to conceive that the happiness, the pleasure, the bliss, can be increased: yet so it is. The angels rejoice, and God Himself so loves us, that though He has His dwelling so high, yet He regards with approbation the gathering in of His chosen into His kingdom.

Lord, grant unto me ever to think more favourably of the spiritual state of others than of my own; Thou that hearest prayer, hear me, unworthy, whenever I call upon Thee to have mercy on the souls of those with whom I have to do. Whether known or unknown, let me never pass by any one who seems particularly wretched and degraded, without praying that his soul may be precious in Thy sight. I know not whether that person may not cause joy in heaven; I know not whether that soul may not be higher exalted than mine which has had such superior advantages.

Thursday after Third Sunday.

*And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour
both with the Lord and also with men.*

I Samuel, ii. 26.



GUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

The history of the birth of Samuel is fraught with instruction and comfort, both to mothers, to whom it is peculiarly suited, and also to persons in general, who cannot fail to be edified by the faith, the answer to prayer, the loan lent to the Lord, and the continual prosperity of that "loan," placed as it was beyond the reach of such care as is usually required.

Hannah earnestly desired to have children; her tender heart yearned for one on whom it could place its purest affection. Besides which she was taunted with having no children, and this made her fret. But Hannah had recourse to the only consolation which could await her in her trouble. She went into the Temple, and there opened her bitterness of soul to the Lord; she prayed and wept sore. Her prayer was heard; she brought forth her son, and she remembered the vow wherewith she had vowed him unto the Lord. She had been faithful in making her prayer, she was faithful in performing her vow.

Her little Samuel was the Lord's; and full of gratitude to her gracious God for His blessed gift, she made no excuses or delays in performing her promise. As soon as he was in any degree fit to

be parted from her, she gave her darling child into the hands of Eli the priest.

How I marvel at the great love and faith of Hannah! she wept sore when she had no child; but when her wish was fulfilled, and she was about to part from this child of prayer and tears, did she weep sore? No; she says, "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord," and she is inspired with divine words to praise the Lord Who had done so marvellously for her. Her faith and her love were rewarded; every year when she took him a little coat, she witnessed his growth in grace, and his increase in favour with God and with man.

How faithless am I when I have this history, among others, before me, ever to hesitate or debate a moment, and not at once to place my cause in the hands of the Lord; how dull am I not to fly in every difficulty to the God Who alone doeth great wonders!

I may not have the high privilege of lending anything that I can call mine to the Lord, but I may give myself, as a living sacrifice, unto the God Who hearkens unto prayer, and will perform all my petitions. I may minister before the Lord daily, by coming unto Him duly into His courts; by approaching Him in my prayers; by offering up my every action to my God; and I may hope by these means to increase in spiritual stature, and to be in favour with God and with men.

Praised be Thou, O Lord, for thus shewing me, in the lives of Thy saints, my own high calling and exceeding blessedness. Grant when I come before Thee with petitions, and make my vows in Thy sight, that I may be heard; and enable me rigidly and strictly to render unto Thee that which I have vowed. O grant me "my Samuel" to my prayers.

Grant that I may lend my most precious things unto Thee; and may "the Samuel" Thou hast graciously given me increase in wisdom, and stature, and in Thy grace and favour!



Friday after Third Sunday.

Speak ; for Thy servant heareth.—1 Samuel, iii. 10.



UICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may meditate profitably.

How often during my life has the Lord called unto me, and I have not recognized His voice! He spake to me oftentimes in my youth, by the voice of my parents. His gracious warning then kept me from the path of danger, and instilled many good principles and habits in me. But alas, I then knew not His voice, and I sorrowfully remember in how many ways, and at how many different times, I neglected and fell short, and despised, and rebelled against His voice. O that the young would be warned in time, and before they have soiled the baptismal purity of their garments, would listen to the voice of the Lord, and say, *Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth!* In so many ways the Lord speaks to the young, His appeals are so affecting, so awakening to the tender conscience, that it is sad so many careless and trifling ones should be found; O may they turn from this and be wholly attentive to that glorious voice which is mighty in operation! But I am past the time of youth, and I have been in some measure awakened to a sense of the grace which God bestoweth with-

out measure, and to the love and mercy of God in having elected me a member of His body. But still let me ask myself the question: Do I, like Samuel, awake when the Lord calleth to me? Do I listen to every possible indication of His blessed will? Do I look and search every way in which God will speak to His servant? Samuel at first knew not the voice; but when that knowledge was given him, he answered faithfully and promptly; if he had been told before-hand that God would call to him, he might have expected to hear a mighty voice, great thunderings, and awful signs of the Divine Presence, as when He spoke to Moses in the mount, and he might not have known that the still small voice, the calm tender call, "Samuel, Samuel," was the way in which the Almighty God vouchsafed to make Himself heard. Even so to me; He may speak to me in His loudest way; He does send terrible warnings sometimes; but His ordinary ways are not so. His footsteps are not known, and if I slumber and neglect my watching, I may awake and find that the Lord has been there, and I not heard the message, or lost the blessing.

Think, O my soul, of the many ways in which the Lord speaks to thee; if thou neglect a duty, the failure in the object at which thou aimest, is the voice of the Lord to thee; if thou art negligent in prayer, the difficulty thou experiencest when thou wouldst again be fervent is the voice of the Lord to thee; the loss of worldly goods is the voice of the Lord; the loss of dear ones is the voice of the Lord; and, my soul, thou hast sometimes been favoured with hearing the voice of the Lord, when, at the holy communion, He has given thee such sensible comforts, such high aspirations, such glorious illuminations of the Spirit, as can only come

when God Himself speaks to the soul, and gives it a foretaste of that bliss which is laid up in store for those who love Him.

To some few chosen saints, as well as to the young Samuel, the Lord has spoken in so remarkable a manner, as was not to be mistaken; all is but a confirmation of the necessity of constant listening and of ever saying with devout reverence, Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.

Behold me, Lord, I am ready to hear Thee, whether Thou speakest as a tender Father to guide and to encourage; whether as a Lawgiver to prohibit; whether as a merciful Saviour to deliver; whether as an Omnipotent and Just God to reprove and punish; in whatever way Thou callest to me, may I say, with as earnest intention, with as simple faith, as Thy chosen prophet, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."



Saturday after Third Sunday.

It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good.

I Samuel, iii. 18.



QUICKEN me by Thy grace, O Lord, and give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may now meditate profitably.

How often are these words, or words such as these, upon my lips when anything befalls me, which I in ignorance or blindness consider a misfortune. There is often a want of reality in the manner in which I use them. I do not really feel so resigned to the will of the Lord as my words import. There is danger in using such words from Holy Writ, without deeply considering their mean-

ing, and without feeling that we are only warranted in using them, under a corresponding experience, and as a true expression of the feeling of the heart.

Eli was told of the impending ruin of his house ; the curse of God upon it implied deep blame to himself, for the sons brought up by him were guilty of the most heinous sins. The announcement was made by a young child who acted as his servant. Thus every circumstance must have aggravated the distress of the venerable man, and made his simple acquiescence in the divine decree most touching : "It is the Lord ; let Him do what seemeth Him good."

Imagine, my soul, the greatest calamity that thou canst conceive, hanging over thee, involving in ruin all thy dearest and nearest ; canst thou sit humbly beneath the chastisement and say, It is the Lord ? Imagine thyself tortured with bodily pain, or racked with mental anguish ; canst thou say, It is the Lord ? Thou must ponder well over these things, and lay up in the storehouse of thy mind all the results of these thoughts, that when the day of adversity comes, thou mayest bring forth such a treasure of submission to the Almighty Disposer of events, as will break the strength of the chastisements, and turn thy temporal sorrow into spiritual joy.

Remember, as an encouragement to gain the virtue of resignation, remember Gethsemane ; behold, a greater than Eli was there ! There, bowed down to the ground, being in an agony, His face covered with a bloody sweat, falling prostrate, stretching forth His hands, Behold the Man ; what says He ? Father, not My will but Thine be done ! What caused this dreadful agony ? Thy sins, O my soul ; the weight of a whole world's

transgressions bowed down that gracious head, and caused the bloody sweat to pour down those sacred cheeks; it was to save thee, and all the world, that those words were uttered: Not My will but Thine be done. Divine words spoken by God Himself!

My soul, after this consideration, how canst thou, when thy petty trials (how infinitely small in comparison!) assail thee, but exclaim with Eli: It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good! Nay, how much more is the Lord with thee; Eli died because he had not the ark to look upon; thou canst ever gaze upon the Cross!



Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.—Romans, viii. 18.



OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

The present time,—eternal life,—what comparison is there between these? A few short years passed either in sorrow or pain, or in joy and pleasure, are soon over. The man who so lately came into the world a helpless infant, is soon stretched on his death-bed, gasping out the few last mouthfuls of breath. He has run his course; he is about to enter into eternity; the vast, the unfathomable eternity. The few brief years he has passed upon

earth are to be reviewed by the great Judge. O how paltry and insignificant now appear all the objects after which he strived, and groaned, and fretted. How worthless do all his actions appear, but those whose sole object was to obey and glorify the great Lord and Judge, Who can award either eternal happiness or misery.

The words in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans were written to encourage the primitive Christians, who had to suffer for their faith every persecution that the hardness of man's heart could devise. St. Paul knew all, and yet he confidently asserts that those sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. How true it is that this life is passing like a shadow; day after day, year after year, fly by us; anticipated pleasures are gone; dreaded occasions and times of trial are gone also. I look round; children are become men and women; the hearty, the vigorous are become infirm and decrepit; times look dark, anxieties thicken, all warns me that man walketh in a vain show; he disquieteth himself in vain. But thou, O my soul, resolve so to live as thou wilt wish that thou hadst done, when thou comest to die. Remember that thy light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for thee a more exceeding and eternal glory; remember this and shrink not from the trials which await thee. "The glory which shall be revealed in us," presents no precise picture to thee; thou canst not realize what such glory can be; thou canst not imagine the blissful communion of purified and glorified creatures with each other, and with the all-holy, all-pure, all-beautiful Majesty on high. Thy impurity, O my soul, cannot penetrate into this glorious prospect, but thou must rest satisfied with dwelling on

the words, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath in store for them that love Him."

O Lord, the great and glorious God, grant that I may seek Thee, and love Thee for Thyself. Thou art my exceeding great reward: Oh, if I may but finally attain unto that glory which shall be revealed, I will suffer all things in this life patiently, thankfully, joyfully, if only Thyself art my reward, and I may dwell with Thee for ever.

I SAID, I will take heed to my ways: that I offend not in my tongue.

I will keep my mouth as it were with a bridle: while the ungodly is in my sight.

I held my tongue, and spake nothing: I kept silence, yea, even from good words; but it was pain and grief to me.

My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled: and at the last I spake with my tongue;

Lord, let me know mine end, and the number of my days: that I may be certified how long I have to live.

Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long: and mine age is even as nothing in respect of Thee; and verily every man living is altogether vanity.

For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what is my hope: truly, my hope is even in Thee.

Deliver me from all mine offences: and make me not a rebuke unto the foolish.

I became dumb, and opened not my mouth : for it was Thy doing.

Take Thy plague away from me : I am even consumed by the means of Thy heavy hand.

When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, Thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment : every man therefore is but vanity.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with Thine ears consider my calling : hold not Thy peace at my tears.

For I am a stranger with Thee : and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength : before I go hence, and be no more seen.



Monday after Fourth Sunday.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Romans, viii. 19.



OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light ; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

I entered this world a wailing infant ; my frail body was subject to convulsive pains ; tears and cries were the only signs by which I could make my wants known to those around me ; and without the tenderest care of my attendants, my weak frail body could not have supported the first burden of

the flesh. But still I was a child of expectation; my parents looked forward to the time when all their anxieties and cares would be rewarded by seeing the maturing of my strength, and hearing my first attempts at speech. So I grew on, and in my childhood and in my youth I was ever looking forward to promised joys, increased privileges, and brighter hopes, which smoothed down many of the difficulties by which my childish path was beset.

By degrees, as the mental eye opened, and the spiritual vision became clear, I was led to the contemplation of God; of the wonders of creation; the mysteries of redemption; and then, as perfection was brought before me, I turned my eye upon myself, and beheld my spiritual nakedness. I saw how my nature was corrupted; I learnt the reason why, as I still walked along the path of life, troubles and sorrows and anxieties beset my path. But though my unworthiness, my stubbornness, and my blindness were brought into full view, yet, at the same time, the blessed fact came before me, that I had received the adoption; that God Himself had vouchsafed to become my Father, and that I had only to strive and to turn the earnest expectation of the creature for worldly joys and earthly blessings, into strivings, and prayers, and watchings, and earnest endeavours after that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. The young are always looking forward to a beautiful and happy future; they are children of expectation, prisoners of hope; they have the image of the heavenly impressed on them, and they expect to find their dreams of joy and happiness realized in this world; but the vision they see is not of this world; they really see, with the eyes of their innocence, the brightness of the heavenly

mansions; they overlook the deep gulf between them and their darling hope.

But, now, the world with its sorrows and cares, the flesh with its never-ending struggles, and the devil with his ceaseless attacks, have laid open the truth before me. The whole creation groaneth, and we ourselves groan within ourselves, and we have no part in this world; we yearn after a better country, and our earnest expectations are centred upon that blessed manifestation of the sons of God. O my soul, when thou art careful and troubled about many things, think upon the vanity of all earthly objects, and turn all thy energy to the attainment of that heavenly city where thou wilt be received as a child of the King of kings; where, with thy garments washed in the Blood of the Lamb, thou wilt be received into that ineffable bliss, of which all thy expectations, and imaginings, and longings, and yearnings have given thee but the faintest shadow. O be not faint and weary, but look still, and hope and pray that thou mayest be counted worthy of this calling, and may, at the Lord's appearing, see Him as He is, and so be like Him.



Tuesday after Fourth Sunday.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.—St. Luke, vi. 36, 37.



OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

How blest we are in being reminded day by day of some duty, some virtue, some privilege, the contemplation of which may draw us near, "each to the other, all to God." I am now reminded of some essential points of duty to my neighbour, points which I am too liable practically to forget. I can see when others transgress the laws of charity. I am shocked at the many instances in which people talk and act as if they had no love in their hearts. But in so doing I forget what manner of man I am myself, and I am the first to cry out, if any one comes not up to my notions of what is right and fitting in his conduct and bearing.

Our Father is merciful, yea, how merciful! From my childhood even until now I have been in a great trespass, but He continues to pour His benefits upon me. He has not withdrawn from me the light of His countenance; and still I go on, carelessly, rather than wilfully, disregarding His precepts. Our Father is merciful, for He is willing to spare me; but I am unwilling to make allowances for others, though I know not of their hearts


half the depravity I know of my own. Remembering this, seeing how much I need forgiveness, let me not think harshly of others, let me be merciful, as my Father is merciful.

Judge not, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, and thou knowest not whether thou thyself wilt not be in the same condemnation. In the last day, if thou hast in thy life-time judged thy brother, that judgment shall fall upon thee. How darest thou therefore pass sentence upon thy brother? thou canst not see into his heart; thou must look to thyself, and then if thou findest thyself without sin, thou mayest "cast the first stone."

It is impossible to judge fairly of the actions of others; we cannot see their hearts, their circumstances, the outward inducements, the inward impulses to their actions; we must make a firm resolution never to think of, or condemn the conduct of others. Prune thy own words, regulate thy own thoughts, make a covenant with thine own eyes, and suspend thy judgment of others, unless thou art called upon to vindicate God's honour by examining into their conduct; should this be necessary, set about the work solemnly, prayerfully, with a full determination to be merciful after thy power, and to judge not according to appearances, but righteously. O most just Judge! I beseech Thee to look into my heart, and send down Thy gracious Spirit to enable me to eject that insidious fault—judging of others. Thou seest, Lord, my weakness, my infirmity; shew me the unreasonableness of my condemning others when the house of my own soul is so desolate and in ruins. Give me, O Lord, an enlarged charity, that I may not judge, that I may not condemn; but grant me, Lord, to be merciful even as Thou art merciful.

Wednesday after Fourth Sunday.

Be ye therefore merciful.—St. Luke, vi. 36.

OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light ; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

I must reflect on the necessity I continually lie under of the mercy of God, and how easy a means our Lord has prescribed for obtaining His mercy. All my good must come from God, and as I have rendered myself absolutely unworthy of any good at all by my sins, I can allege nothing for myself, but can only appeal to the Divine mercy that He may give me the graces which I have not deserved, and forgive the sins by which I have deserved them.

Thus, finding mercy with God, is all in all, and the means of finding that mercy is to shew mercy to others—forgive, and ye shall be forgiven ; give, and it shall be given unto you ! O how lovely, how beautiful, how beneficent is this virtue of mercy, both for time and eternity ! How sweet are all her fruits ! She is the favourite of heaven, and makes all her lovers favourites of heaven ; she is the eldest daughter of the great King, Whose mercy is over all His works ; she shews herself to all them that seek her ; she runs to embrace all them that love her ; she carries them to her Father's home, even to the mansions of a happy eternity.

Let me consider the different ways of shewing mercy recommended by the Word of God.

There are two kinds of mercy to be shewn to our neighbour, temporal and spiritual. The temporal works of mercy are divided into feeding and clothing the poor members of Jesus Christ, visiting and relieving the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned, such works as these are a sacrifice well-pleasing to God; they have been done unto the poor of Christ, Who considers them as done unto Himself.

Secondly. Spiritual works of mercy, by assisting and relieving our neighbours in their spiritual necessities; by good counsel and instruction; encouraging them in temptations; and especially by reclaiming them from errors and vices, and by that means delivering their souls from the second and everlasting death, and putting them in the right way of coming to live for ever with the loving God. The Son of God came down from heaven to exercise these works upon earth; in these He employed the days of His mortal life. O let us be glad to follow His great example as far as our weakness will allow us.

The reward here promised to the merciful is, that they shall obtain mercy, both here and hereafter, spiritually and temporally, by having their wants redressed and their sins forgiven them, and by being received hereafter into everlasting dwellings, and finding there the fruit of all the seed of mercy here sown, multiplied to an hundred fold. Alas! how wretched shall I be if God does not shew me mercy! How happy, if by being merciful to others, I ensure His mercy to myself.

Resolve, O my soul, to be ever merciful to thy neighbours, that thou mayest find mercy with God, for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again; yea, with infinite advantage, for good measure pressed down and

shaken together, running over, will the good and merciful God give into your bosom. Grant, O Lord, that I may be merciful, and may obtain Thy infinite mercy.

BLESSED is he that considereth the poor and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.

The Lord preserve him, and keep him alive, that he may be blessed upon earth : and deliver not Thou him into the will of his enemies.

The Lord comfort him, when he lieth sick upon his bed : make Thou all his bed in his sickness.

I said, Lord, be merciful unto me : heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

Mine enemies speak evil of me : When shall he die, and his name perish ?

And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity : and his heart conceiveth falsehood within himself, and when he cometh forth he telleth it.

All mine enemies whisper together against me : even against me do they imagine this evil.

Let the sentence of guiltiness proceed against him : and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more.

Yea, even mine own familiar friend, whom I trusted : who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great wait for me.

But be Thou merciful unto me, O Lord : raise Thou me up again, and I shall reward them.


By this I know Thou favourest me : that mine enemy doth not triumph against me.

And when I am in my health, Thou upholdest me : and shalt set me before Thy face for ever.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel world without end. *Amen.*

Thursday after Fourth Sunday.

Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.—St. Luke, vi. 37.

OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light ; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable unto me.

In many things we offend all ; but our gracious and merciful Lord has given us means and ways of escaping from His most just judgment.

When I think upon what sin is, I marvel that man can ever find a place for repentance, for God is so infinitely good, that to offend Him seems the most enormous ingratitude and depravity. Alas ! that so it is, that not only the wicked and profane, but even those who are good and virtuous, and have the wish to live close to God, are continually slipping back and doing the things they would not. But God saw the difficulty that His fallen creatures were placed in, and He has made a propitiation for our sins. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift ! His Son Jesus Christ became a Sacrifice for us ; He poured out His blood and cleansed us, and is ever entreating for us at the right hand of the Father. Thus we, like the creditor, have had our debt of ten thousand talents forgiven us. He, moved by compassion, has loosed us and forgiven the whole debt. Then we go into the world and we meet with fellow servants, and they contract debts with us, and we forget our own debt, and we roughly demand payment, without pity and without consideration we exact the uttermost farthing ;

but our Lord will not have it so ; we have not forgiven our brother, and therefore we shall not be forgiven ourselves.

My soul, thou canst make a closer application of this to thyself. Consider, in thy intercourse with thy brethren, all that befalls thee in this matter of forgiveness. It is much easier in this, as in many other cases, to perform a great act, than to undergo the many trifling injuries and annoyances of daily life ; but as in other matters, so in this, attend to small things, and if thou beginnest by forgiving, instantly and at once, him who speaks disparagingly of a much prized quality or virtue, thou wilt find it easier to forgive the debt of him who has robbed thee of thy good name or has deprived thee of thy dearest blessing. But in all this matter of forgiveness, remember, and set constantly before thee, the one great Propitiation. He Who has brought into the world that precious quality of forgiveness, He will prize thy sacrifices, for His Blood purchased thy forgiveness ; He knows what it cost to redeem thee, and He will favourably look upon the struggles that thou makest to overcome the natural man, which whispers revenge and punishment ; and He will send down His Spirit to assist thee in finding out how infinitely sweet it is to "forgive the whole debt."

BLESSED is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven : and whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no sin : and in whose spirit there is no guile.

For while I held my tongue : my bones consumed away through my daily complaining.

For Thy hand is heavy upon me day and night : and my moisture is like the drought in summer.

I will acknowledge my sin unto Thee : and mine unrighteousness have I not hid.

I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord : and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.

For this shall every one that is godly make his prayer unto Thee, in a time when Thou mayest be found : but in the great waterfloods they shall not come nigh Him.

Thou art a place to hide me in, Thou shalt preserve me from trouble : Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go : and I will guide thee with Mine eye.

Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding : whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, lest they fall upon thee.

Great plagues remain for the ungodly : but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every side.

Be ye glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord : and be joyful, all ye that are true of heart.



Friday after Fourth Sunday.

The disciple is not above his master : but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

St. Luke, vi. 40.



OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light ; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

To be perfect even as our Father Which is in heaven is perfect, this is the end of all the strivings for which I now walk on, sometimes rejoicing, but more often sorrowful, in this world. I am walking on, following my Master and Saviour, Jesus Christ : but sometimes I go as if nothing restrained me ; as if I were not conscious that I have always sin to avoid ; as if I were above that Divine Master, Who is meek and lowly. I am full of the pride of life and of fondness for the things of this world. My Master is not so ; He is meek and lowly in heart ; He is poor in condition ; He is humble ; He giveth His cheek to the smiter, and neither strives nor cries ; He goes about doing good ;—while I, His unworthy follower, am proud and dainty, and overbearing, and think much of anything that I do for the good of others. And yet I do sincerely desire to have Jesus for my Master ; and I am always striving to live more according to my Divine Pattern. If I am as my Master, I shall see Him as He is ; I shall be like Him. Can I entertain this hope ? He was manifested to take away our sins. He hath promised, that whoso cometh to Him, He will in no wise cast out. Through the blood of Jesus I have a hope that my iniquity may be forgiven, my sin covered, and that through the one perfect and sufficient Sacrifice once offered on the Cross, I may be enabled to approach the throne of grace, calling out, “ God be merciful to me a sinner.”

But I must be perfect, to be as my Master ; and until I am as my Master, I shall not see Him as He is.

O my soul ! thou art aware of thy imperfections, and thou deemest it impossible to purify thyself, even as He is pure. Of thyself thou canst do no-

thing; but remember that thou canst do all things through Christ, Which strengtheneth thee. Thou art too forgetful of the all-powerful operations of the Holy Spirit; thou must earnestly pray for the assistance of that Holy Spirit; thou must contemplate the Divine Pattern set before thee; thou must hang upon every word which proceeds from His gracious lips; thou must follow in humble acquiescence the motions of His blessed will; thou must fix thine eyes upon Him; and when thy earthly pilgrimage is over, although thou wilt perceive that thou art not perfect, yet thou wilt rely entirely upon Him. He will wash thee in His most precious Blood; He will give thee clean garments. Thou shalt see Him as He is; thou shalt be as thy Master. O blessed Jesu, grant that I may follow on, to know Thee more perfectly. Cast me not away from Thy presence, but assist me, gracious Lord, so to imitate the blessed steps of Thy most holy life, that I may purify myself even as Thou art pure, and daily be renewed after Thy Image, Who art my only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*



Saturday after Fourth Sunday.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?—St. Luke, vi. 41.



OME, Holy Spirit of God, and visit my soul with Thy bright beams of light; be ever with me, I beseech Thee, but especially now in this my meditation, and make Thou it profitable to me.

I am always thinking of the difficulties and temptations of my intercourse with others; I am ever willing to attribute the difficulty to the faults of others, and especially to the corruption of the world.

I believe if I come to consider the subject maturely, that I shall find that the difficulty lies with myself, that my sins and my infirmities are the causes of most of the temptations of my intercourse with the world, and that my sin-dimmed eyes are prone to distort the actions and habits of others, and to blame them for what rises entirely out of myself.

But the "mote," and the "beam," are two definite and precise objects; I must endeavour to meditate profitably upon them; I must suppose that some one, with whom I am in the habit of frequent intercourse, has a prominent defect; he may be of a bad temper, or may have some fault or failing which grates against me. I unconditionally condemn that person, I attribute his failings to want of religious principle; of that principle I imagine myself to be possessed; and I despise him, and feel myself superior to him. In this instance, is not the failing of my neighbour but a mote, in comparison with the beam of spiritual pride and self-satisfaction which dims my vision, and prevents my seeing both the palliating circumstances in my neighbour's case, and the aggravations of my own? There are no degrees in sin; all sins are equally offences against God, and all equally deserve punishment; the soul that sinneth, it shall die; but the difference seems to me to arise from the circumstances under which each individual is placed, of which no man can judge, but only God, Who seeth the heart: the same thing which is a beam in my eye, might be a mote in the eye of another.

Thou art inexcusable, therefore, O my soul, if thou judgest; search out thine own sores, and turn to thy Saviour to heal them; but judge no man, and in thy intercourse with men seek not to search into their actions, bring them not into comparison with thine own; and if ever thou art tempted to do so, bring before thee thy last act of self-examination, recollect how *that* condemned thee! consider thy besetting sin, and place thyself the last and lowest; for verily thou knowest more evil of thyself than of any other human being; for thou knowest what thy opportunities, thy privileges, thy incitements to virtue are, and thou seest that in spite of these, thou hast a beam, a besetting sin or infirmity, which thou must cast out.

GOD standeth in the congregation of princes :
He is a Judge among gods.

How long will ye give wrong judgment : and accept the persons of the ungodly?

Defend the poor and fatherless : see that such as are in need and necessity have right.

Deliver the out-cast and poor : save them from the hand of the ungodly.

They will not be learned nor understand, but walk on still in darkness : all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

I have said, Ye are gods : and ye are all the children of the Most Highest.

But ye shall die like men : and fall like one of the princes.

Arise, O God, and judge Thou the earth : for Thou shalt take all heathen to Thine inheritance.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.—1 St. Peter, iii. 11.



LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Do I desire eternal life, and have I any wish to live as a Christian ought to live in these present days? I have that desire, and as much as lieth in me, I would order my goings in the paths of God, during this present life. I am told that the tongue is a chief instrument of evil; in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man. Seeing, therefore, that the tongue is such an instrument both for good and for evil, I will consider how it comes to offend, how the offence is to be avoided, and how I must order my words, so as to become a perfect man.

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh; unless my heart is pure, my tongue will not cease from evil; but even when the heart is right, and the thoughts pure, there is still apt to be a thoughtlessness and flippancy in the words and expressions, which, from its evil tendency, cannot fail to be accounted a grievous sin.

This carelessness of words is the greatest snare, or at least the most common, which ordinary intercourse with the world seems to involve; conven-

tional phrases, harmless in themselves, are used to shield us from inconvenience or censure. Then we are hurried on to joke or talk lightly of things that ought to be treated with respect and reverence, and in every way there is a want of recollection, which betokens that God is not in all our thoughts.

This defect seems to be of very difficult correction; because, when we have got our tongue so far under control that ordinary conversation tempts not, we again err when, under the influence of excitement, we for the time lose the mastery over ourselves.

This, therefore, is a matter for serious and constant self-examination; in no other way can we hope to put so effectual a restraint upon our tongues, as the frequent detection of, and consequent penitence for, so grievous an error.

My soul, this is a subject over which, for long, thou hast had to lament and to weep; thou art most guilty in this way, and thou feelest the snare, because when thou hast most erred, the world has most applauded. Resolve to put a severe guard over thy tongue, that thou speak not too much, that thou exaggerate not, that thou art not insincere, or unreal; that thou jest not on things not convenient, that thou speak no lies, nor flatter thy neighbour; nor slander thy neighbour; that thou equivocate not.

These things thou must specially be careful of, and endeavour to keep alive in thee a sense of the presence of God, which will restrain not thy tongue only, but thy thoughts.

Thou, O gracious Saviour, Who art my example and pattern in all things, be with me in my endeavours to curb my tongue; Thou, Who didst pray for Thine enemies, Who didst commend Thy

mother to the care of Thy disciple John, Who didst declare Thy humanity by saying, "I thirst," Who didst call, as forsaken, to Thy Father, Who didst commend Thy Spirit into Thy Father's hands; Thou, Whose seven last words give me a never-ending source of meditation, grant that, remembering how Thou didst so sanctify words, I may learn to count the words of my lips as sanctified by Thee, and may take heed that I offend not in my tongue.



Monday after Fifth Sunday.

For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

I St. Peter, iii. 12.



O LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Here is another inducement to forsake evil ways, and follow those that are good. How stupid and ignorant are those who prefer darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil! How stupid have I often been, and doubly sinful, because, not being ignorant of God's ways, I have not clung closely to them, but have suffered myself to be led away into vanity. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous; let me consider the tenderness and Fatherly care of our gracious God, Who is ever

watching over those who seek to be His, truly and entirely. He keeps them in all their goings, He suffers not their footsteps to slide, but He gently leads them into the green pastures of His holy ways, and beside the still waters, He giveth them of the refreshing streams of His grace. Yea, though troubles, sickness, terrors, evil times, befall them, though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they will fear no evil, for He is with them, His rod and His staff, they comfort them. O blessed Providence of our God! How faithless is it to repine or be afraid, when I am convinced that His eyes are ever upon me, watching me; His arms round me, keeping me from all evil; and His ears open to my prayers! He heareth the righteous when they call unto Him, and He giveth them all their desire. The righteous only desire to do His will, and, therefore, though from the weakness of our mortal nature we ask feebly, and often amiss, yet the Lord answers the *spirit* of those prayers, and gives what in His Omniscience is best for them. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Against them! O Lord, how terrible is this! How could I bear to see the gracious face of my God turned from me! Resolve, therefore, more and more steadfastly, O my soul, to forsake every evil way, and cling to that which is good; beseech thy God to turn His face from thy sins, and blot out thy misdeeds, to give thee a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within thee. Go to thy Saviour, to Jesus, and beseech Him to give thee an interest in that precious Blood-shedding, which alone can blot out thy many sins. O Lord, my Saviour, turn Thy gracious eyes upon me, as Thou didst upon Peter in the hall: watch over me, O Saviour, and let Thy

preventing care keep me from all evil. Into Thy hands I commend myself, O Lord God of truth. Shew the light of Thy countenance upon me; hearken when I call, O God of my righteousness! *Amen.*



Tuesday after Fifth Sunday

Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at Thy word I will let down the net.—St. Luke, v. 5.



LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Our blessed Lord stands by the lake of Genesareth; behold the people crowd round Him, to hear the gracious words which issue from His lips, and to partake of the benefit of His healing power. Who will depart from the blessed Jesus, while they can listen to His words? To see His face, to have the slightest indication of His presence, is enough; we linger near, and gaze upon the God of our adoration with love and awe, and we press upon Him to hear the word of God. There are the ships near, the fishermen are gone out and are mending their nets.

A ship is ever the type of the Church; our Lord enters alone, He separates from the world, "thrusts a little from the land," and teaches the people out of the ship. Even so now, gracious Lord, from

Thy Church Thou teachest the people who press about Thee ; how mercifully dost Thou instruct them, leading them on through the yearly round of faith and practice ; each day, each week, brings its accustomed and ordered round of prayer and praise ; each holy season leads on by its praises, or by the humiliation appointed in its proper course, to the contemplation and adoration of the Father the Creator, the Son the Redeemer, the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier ; but our lives answer not to this constant round of duties daily performed ; we exclaim with Peter, "Lord, I have toiled all day, and taken nothing !"

Dost thou say this, O my soul ? Yea, my heart sinks to think of the toil, the labour, that it takes to value as they ought to be valued, the privileges which as a member of Christ's Church I enjoy, of the small amount of personal holiness I have attained ; well may I exclaim with Peter, "Lord, I have toiled all night and taken nothing !" Get thee to thy Saviour, fall down before Him, beseech Him to enter into the ship, obey His gracious commands to the very letter, try once more, let down thy net, and be sure that He, thy Jesus, thy God, will give thee those things of the Spirit which thou desirest.

O Lord, my spiritual work is indeed a toil ; I labour, I try in vain ; but Thou wilt specially interfere for me. Grant me, Lord, the spirit of perseverance, that, after every discouragement, I may again let down my net ; and grant, O gracious Lord, that I may enclose therein such a multitude of graces, and spiritual privileges, as may carry me on, and furnish me with Thy sustenance until my life's end.

Wednesday after Fifth Sunday.

Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

St. Luke, v. 10.



LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

The object of this miracle was, no doubt, to shew to Peter, and those who were with him, the object for which they were called. "To catch men;" this is what the apostles were appointed by God's providence to do, when their Lord and Saviour sent them to teach all nations, giving them the gracious promise of being "with them until the end of the world." This promise, as the end of the world is not yet come, is still being fulfilled, and I see in the ordained ministers of God's holy word and sacraments, the successors of the apostles, to whom this promise has descended.

To catch men, therefore, is the appointed task of God's ministers, whether they be bishops, priests, or deacons; this ought to give them a great dignity in my eyes, and I ought to assist them as much as lies in my feeble power by my prayers, and by putting all those who are in any way guided by me, in the way of being caught into that net, which will draw them to the shores of the heavenly country.

The apostle, St. Peter, was afraid when he saw the miracle, and said, "Depart from me, for I am

a sinful man, O Lord ;” and the Lord said, “Fear not.” This ought to be a great comfort to me, inasmuch as I cannot but know that human nature is prone to evil, and that even God’s ministers are “sinful men ;” yet this by no means destroys their mission, but rather gives me occasion to bless God, for bringing good to my soul, out of what is in itself evil.

Jesus Himself is with those who are duly appointed to preach His gospel when ministering in their office ; Jesus commands them to let down their net, and it is the power of God our Saviour alone that blesses the endeavour, by bringing into the net such as shall be saved. What great need, therefore, is there that the spiritual fishermen should have the fervent prayers of the people, that God will bless his ministry ; for to catch men is to bring them out of the deep waters of sin ; to take them out of darkness, and to bring them into the glorious light of the gospel ; and when the Spirit of God has so stirred up the soul of a sinner by the words of His ministering servant, that there is a desire clearly manifested of being drawn out of the deep waters, and brought to the shore of salvation, in the light of divine grace ; when the minister witnesses that conversion, sees the success which has attended the letting down his net, is it not likely that his own weakness and sinfulness, his own deep poverty, and insufficiency in such a work, will flash upon him, and that he will exclaim with St. Peter, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord ?”

O Lord, let my love and reverence for Thy faithful ministers increase and deepen, as I awaken to a sense of their high office and deep responsibility ; as I see their anxious charges, and the number of

souls wandering about who have never been caught and put into Thy net. Let me sympathize in their toils and anxieties, and let me never omit to lend them such aid as I can offer. O Lord, help me to pray to Thee rightly at all times for these Thy chosen servants; and do Thou, gracious Saviour, when they are overwhelmed with the greatness of their charge and of their toil, whisper to them those words of comfort, "Fear not."



Thursday after Fifth Sunday.

They forsook all, and followed Him.—St. Luke, v. 11.



LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

The disciples, when they saw by His miracles, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, forsook all, their worldly calling, and means of support, their relatives and friends, and followed Him. Then they became, for the first time, His disciples truly, for our Lord says, "No man can serve two masters;" and if they had entered into the Lord's service with a divided heart, He would not have accepted them. He says, "My son, give Me thine heart;" He must have the whole heart, or the service is not acceptable; for what can be done well when the mind is distracted into various channels?

Our Lord's disciples "forsook all;" I am a disciple, a sworn soldier and servant of the Lord, and have I forsaken all, to give undivided allegiance to the Lord God of my salvation?

If I am a disciple of Christ, I must be a Christian indeed; and if I desire to secure that happy eternity with the living God, which is promised to Christ's true and faithful followers, I must renounce all things, however near and dear to me, in order that I may follow Him. By renouncing, I mean that I must transfer all my best hopes and affections from worldly objects, and fix them upon God. I must give up all, that I may find all; and must be disengaged from the creature that I may find the Creator.

Consider these things, O my soul, and sit down deliberately to count the cost; recollect at what thou art aiming, and see the price at which it will have to be purchased. Thou art hoping to attain unto everlasting rest and peace in the heavenly kingdom, there to dwell in the presence of God the blessed and glorious Trinity, with the assembly and Church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect. For this glorious object thou must forsake all, leave all carnal and earthly affections, and follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through Whose mediation and intercession alone thou canst attain to it.

Thou art surrounded by earthly ties, my soul; thou art more or less involved in many worldly pursuits, which are not in the direct line of thy duty; and thou art often engaged in worldly pleasures, from preference, not from their being forced on thee as a duty.

For the last, renounce all; let not thy heart be mixed up in any worldly pleasure, or in any worldly

duty, excepting so far as it is thy duty, the due performance of which will be pleasing unto God. For worldly ties, such as father, child, friend, though at first it may seem that such relations may stay the heart from God, yet it is not so; thou mayest still "forsake all." Consider what are thy duties with respect to thy several relations, for instance, as a father. Let not thy personal feelings affect thy duty to thy child; let nothing of self come between thy duty and thy actions; correct, rebuke, exhort; renounce thyself, thy own feelings, and thou wilt follow thy Lord; nay more, thou wilt not only forsake all and follow Him, but thou wilt lead thy dear ones also by the hand unto that precious Saviour, Who, in the waters of Baptism, stands as it were by the Lake, and through, and by, His holy Church, teaches the people, working for them such miracles of love and mercy, that they press close round Him, and, listening to His all-powerful persuasions, are moved to forsake all, and follow Him !

Grant, merciful Saviour, and most loving Lord, that I may clearly discern, by the light of Thy Holy Spirit, the way in which I ought to leave all, and follow Thee. Oh, let nothing bind me down to earth, but grant that the longer I live, the closer I may follow Thy steps, and may finally find rest with Thee, where I shall receive life everlasting.



Friday after Fifth Sunday.

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.—1 Samuel, xv. 22.



LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

Saul, by the command of God, went to smite Amalek, and utterly destroy it, and all that was in it. He acted in obedience to the Divine command so far as to smite the Amalekites, but instead of destroying everything, he spared Agag the king, and the best of the cattle. This act of disobedience was very displeasing unto God, and for it He punished Saul, by taking his kingdom from him, and by reproving him by the mouth of Samuel the prophet. Sacrifice, without the entire obedience of faith, becomes superstition; and the fat of rams, the most costly offerings, are not accepted from those who wait not and watch not for the Lord.

The virtue of obedience is that which teaches us to embrace, and perform willingly whatever is commanded by a superior. I may consider how great a virtue it is in the sight of the Lord, seeing that He selected it as the test by which to exercise our first parents on their entrance upon the enjoyment of their earthly paradise. What a train of events depended upon their obedience or disobedience! How miserably they fell, and what miseries has that fall brought upon us! After this consideration, let me think upon all those who have been pleasing to

God on account of their obedience: Abraham, whose obedience was taken instead of the sacrifice of his son, his only son Isaac; but think rather on that One, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and became obedient, even unto the death of the cross; think upon the obedience of that blessed Saviour, of that Pattern which I am to endeavour humbly to follow. He obeyed the law; He was subject unto His parents; He declared it to be His meat to do the will of Him that sent Him, and He said, "Father, not My will, but Thine be done." Shall not this great example of God Himself inspire me with the ardent desire of living and dying in holy obedience?

My soul, consider thy sins. God commands thee to go out and do battle against them, and utterly to destroy them; dost thou obey? Hast thou an Agag, a splendid and enticing sin, which thou wishest to pursue; hast thou any foibles cloaked in the garb of virtue? Hast thou that bosom sin, laid up, hidden from all eyes? Hast thou acts of devotion, which, permitted to others, are, under the circumstances in which thou art placed, not to be performed? No, my soul; flatter not thyself that any offering will be taken instead of obedience—absolute, simple obedience. Give up thy darling project, or God will reject thee from being His servant.

The love of independence must be rooted out. Is it not the seat of pride, the origin of self-love, the source of all the worst passions?

But holy obedience casts out all these, and by forcing every thought, every act, into submission to the will and law of God, and to the command of all who are His representatives, it exterminates self-will, and at last presents the whole self a living sacrifice unto God.

O my soul, think on the sweet peace and calm of a heart wholly resigned to the will of the Lord; even the daily occurrences of life are sanctified by being performed and submitted to, in accordance with the precepts of the Most High. Here then is peace and rest; O embrace it, my soul; it renders this vale of misery a springing well, and leads to the fountain-head of bliss hereafter.

O Lord, shew me Thy ways and teach me Thy paths; give me the grace of obedience, that having once been set by Thy blessed Spirit on the path which leads to eternal life, I may never forsake it, but may walk close by Thee, obeying Thy will, keeping Thy commandments, and continuing in Thy fear all the day long.



Saturday after Fifth Sunday.

Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield! but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, Whom thou hast defied.—I Samuel, xvii. 45.



LORD, Thou great and good God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! Be with me, I beseech Thee, at this time, and grant that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart may be acceptable in Thy sight. *Amen.*

I see before me two hostile armies, encamped on two hills opposite the one to the other; a fertile valley runs between them, and contrasts its rural beauty with the martial sights and sounds of the two camps. There is a profound stillness reigning

among the armed warriors; but suddenly there issues from one of the camps a huge man of gigantic proportions, completely covered with armour, and holding in his hand a massive spear. He advances across the valley to the opposite camp, and he cries with a loud voice, and defies the armies of Israel, and speaks great swelling words against the Most High. From the opposite army comes forth no mighty warrior; the air rings not with the counter-defiance of the champion of Israel; but there appears a young man clad in simple, shepherd's raiment, fair to look upon and ruddy: he carries no sword; he trusts not to his bow; but he answers the insolent menace of the Philistine by professing his sure trust in the God of his salvation: "I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts." Then uttering words of sure trust and confidence in the God of Israel, he puts his stone in the sling; he throws it, and the stone sinks into the forehead of that monstrous man: he falls with his face to the earth. David runs to him, takes his sword, and cuts off the Philistine's head.

I may see in this Philistine a type of any great sin or temptation, that either besets a whole people or an individual. Sins are all enemies of the Lord of Hosts, and defy His power, as did Goliath of Gath; I see that to run away from such sin or temptation, to avoid coming in contact with it, is not to overcome it. David was a youth, not come to his full strength; he could not wear armour; but, nevertheless, he boldly advanced with such weapons as he had been in the habit of using, and putting all his trust in God, leaning entirely on the Lord of Hosts for strength, he overcame his enemy.

In thy course, O my soul, thou must be prepared to meet sometimes with some great temptation to

sin. Thou art weak ; nevertheless forget not thy confidence in God. He will support thee in thy struggle. Thou seest the giant advancing, strengthen thyself with much inward prayer, and go forth ; but inasmuch as thou hast not proved the usual defences of argument, and learning, and subtle reasonings, thou must take against thy adversary the simple weapons thou art in the habit of using ; of prayer ; of silence, if thou art attacked ; of kindness, if thou art abused ; of simple assertion of the truth, if the truth is assailed ; and, above all, take the strong weapon of innocence, of purity of intention, and of simple faith. Thou wilt then overcome thine enemy, and when he falls, thou wilt despatch him with his own weapon.

O Lord, Who, to the prayer of Thy servant David, didst grant the overthrow of his enemy, grant unto me a sure trust and confidence in Thy mighty power, that in all assaults of my enemies, I may triumph and overcome, even by using such weapons as are not carnal, but mighty through Thee to the pulling down of strongholds ; and bring, I beseech Thee, my every thought into subjection, that I may be wholly Thine in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death.—Rom. vi. 3, 4.

IF I stand not by the Cross, I am lost ; if I for an instant lose sight of Him, Who there poured out his soul unto death, I am as one who has wandered out of the way in the wilderness. But I will hold me fast by Jesus, Who died Himself, and was buried in the flesh, even as I, at my baptism, died and was buried to sin. How nearly am I united with the death of the ever-blessed Son of God ! How mysterious is the connection between His death on the Cross and rising from the dead, with my death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness.

I see my Saviour nailed to the cruel Cross. I behold the blood pouring from each wound ; I think upon my sins, the occasion of that bitter suffering ; I lament and weep that nothing but the sacrifice of the Son of God made Man, could atone for the heinousness of my offences. I follow the faithful servants of the dead Saviour : they bear His body to the burial. I see Him laid in the tomb ; I lift myself up in agony towards the offended Majesty on High ; I cry unto Him, and say, Lord, it is finished ! O take away my sins, blot out all my misdeeds, bury them in this the tomb of Thy dear Son, the Lamb without blemish and without spot ; and grant that as I have been baptized into this death, I may also be raised into the life of

righteousness, through this my crucified, my adored Saviour.

My soul, death was thy portion ; death has redeemed thee ; death must be thy constant contemplation and study. Thou must die daily ; thou must crucify the old man with his affections and lusts ; thou must be buried with Christ here, if thou wouldst live with Christ hereafter. Let my life be a constant death ; die to the world that thou mayest live innocently in the world ; die to every affection of this earth, that thou mayest sanctify thy dearest relations, by loving them with and by the love of God. Die to sin ; to thy besetting sin (), to every approach to sin. Bury all with Christ, nail thyself to His Cross, bathe thyself in His precious blood ; and then thy death will cause thee to possess a more abundant life, and health, and vigour. Thou mayest then hope for, and share in that joyful resurrection, when He, the Lamb Who was slain, shall stand to receive His chosen servants, as King of kings and Lord of lords !

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of Thy blessed Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, so, by continually mortifying our corrupt affections, we may be buried with Him ; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection, for His merits Who died and was buried and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Monday after Sixth Sunday.

That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.—Romans, vi. 4.

HERE again I see my own life placed in connection with the life of Christ. He, the blessed Saviour, was raised up from the dead, death had no more dominion over Him ; so if I have buried my sins in His grave, I shall rise unto newness of life. I have the power given me, through the merits of the death of Christ, to die unto sin, and I have the power given me by the resurrection of Christ, and through the power of the Holy Ghost, to walk in newness of life.

The change wrought in me must be as complete as that effected in a body buried, refashioned, and raised again ; it must be an entirely new creature. This mighty work goes on for the most part gradually : as I see a little child daily advancing and acquiring fresh knowledge and new ideas, so the soul, having been raised with Christ, puts on, by degrees and gradually, according to its own efforts, and according to the measure of grace granted to its prayers, the whole armour of God, until at last it steps forth, arrayed in that heavenly panoply, which will effectually turn aside all the darts of the enemy : the Christian then walks on, brightening and polishing the armour, which is of so exquisite a lustre as to be easily dimmed ; but see the care, and pains, and watchfulness, he bestows upon it ! He walks on, and is finally received into those

blessed abodes where alone he can keep himself entirely pure, and free from blemish or spot.

My soul, think upon the words, "newness of life," and consider how entirely the old man must be put off; think of the pleasures, the riches, the honours of the world; these belong not to the new life; consider thy thoughts, thy proneness to evil in all thy actions, in all thy words, and in all thy motives; think upon the worldly way in which thou regardest the objects of thy affection, how much thou thinkest of their temporal welfare, how little of their spiritual! All these things belong to the old man; but put thou on, O my soul, the new man, put on Jesus; follow Him; study all the points of His most pure and holy life, that thou mayest endeavour to imitate so bright a pattern, and though thou must often fail and fall away, yet persevere, and continue earnest in prayer to God, that He will vouchsafe thee grace to assist thee in thy endeavours. Fix thy thoughts daily upon the death of Jesus, and beseech Him who hung for thee on the cross, to blot out the handwriting of transgression that is against thee, and nail it to that cross; and beseech Him daily, also, to raise thee up in this present time from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that hereafter at the general resurrection thou mayest be raised to life eternal.

Unite me to Thee, O blessed Saviour; the longer I live the more I see how fruitless my life is without Thee. O grant that I may truly and indeed realize the great fact of my dependence on Thy death for the doing away my sins, and of the instrumentality of Thy resurrection in bringing me to the life hid with Thee in God; and evermore

II.

L

grant to me to persevere in following Thee, my gracious Saviour, my joy, my crown, my all!
Amen.



Tuesday after Sixth Sunday.

For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.—Rom. vi. 10.

NOW awful is the consideration of sin. It is the transgression of the laws, commands, and wishes of an infinitely Wise, an infinitely Just, an infinitely Loving God! He commanded our first parents to abstain from eating of the fruit of one particular tree, intimating, by the simplicity of the prohibition, that sin consists not in the nature and extent of the command transgressed, but in the simple fact of the transgression itself. That Adam and Eve dared, or felt inclined, to disobey God's commands, seems extraordinary to us; but we are constantly committing the same error; nay, we do worse, for we have full and perfect knowledge of all the consequences of sin; we have longer experience of the tender mercies and sufferings of our God; we have seen the Seed of the woman break the serpent's head. The stain of that first sin has been done away: by man came death; by Man came also the resurrection from the dead. But by what Man? Who could satisfy the penalty so justly incurred by such disobedience? Who could take upon Him the awful burden of satisfying divine wrath for the sins—the mighty, the awful sins of a whole world—but God Himself? Yea, it was God, Who became

Man, to take upon Him the iniquity of us all. He, the holy, the sinless, was numbered with transgressors, and took upon Him all our sins; and He expiated them by such agonies, such tortures, such direful woes, as make me weep to think on: but more, it was my deserts for which He suffered. I contributed my share to those dying pangs; my misdeeds caused that bitterest cry! O dreadful, cursed sin, that caused those sufferings of the Sinless! O may my hatred of sin increase as I contemplate its dreadful consequences! He died unto sin once; it is finished; the sacrifice is completed, the Victim is offered. He is gone up into heaven; there He ever liveth with God; there He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, very God of very God; there He sitteth to make continual intercession for us. He pleadeth with the Father, in virtue of that blessed Sacrifice offered for us. I cannot estimate the dreadful consequences of relapsing into sin, having been once cleansed from it. How can I contemplate the crucifying our Lord afresh? O Lord, keep me from so unspeakable a sin!

O my soul, meditate upon thy blessed Saviour sitting on His throne in heaven; worship thy glorified Master, beseeching Him that He, having accomplished the work of redemption, and being freed from the dominion of death, may keep thee pure and undefiled from sin, and inspire thee with a horror of its vileness and deformity, that so thou mayest be kept by the power of the Holy Ghost free from all its temptations and allurements; and mayest so look for the second coming of thy Lord, that when He appears, He may bring thee unto those heavenly mansions, which are prepared for those who love Him.

Wednesday after Sixth Sunday.

Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment.—St. Matthew, v. 21.



MAY perhaps imagine that such a sentence as this is not applicable to me, and is only meant for such as by their profession, or by their passions, are placed in the way of committing the crime of murder. But every thing contained in the Scripture is written for our learning; and if I read the twenty-second verse, and see the same principle carried out into its very beginnings, I may perceive that I may be even guilty of the crime of which I think there is no possibility of my becoming culpable. "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause," and whosoever so lets his anger get the better of him as to be betrayed into using bitter words, is guilty of a crime which, if indulged in, may end in his becoming a murderer. Let me be very careful in my self-examination, lest I entertain any feelings of hatred, envy, or malice, against any one. O blessed Spirit, chase and drive away all such evil dispositions from me, lest I be excluded from a portion in eternal life, to which murderers have no title.

How strict a watch have we to keep against the evil one! A word of scorn and contempt (Raca)—a word of bitterness and anger (thou fool)—betokens that there is an evil seed within, which, if not extirpated, may bring forth the evil spirit of murder. My heart must be restrained from entertaining the passion of anger, and much more must I prevent my wrath from breaking forth into words of bitterness or contempt; which might rob my neighbour

of peace, of honour, or, as may too likely happen, deprive him of the grace of God, by provoking him to passion and sin.

O my soul, meditate seriously upon this, for thou art too prone to use hasty words when thou art stirred to anger. Think not of the justice of thy cause, nor of the guilt of him who provoked thee; but think of thy peril, and be not guilty of so awful a crime. Remember thy last things, and let enmity cease. Remember the fear of God, and be not angry with thy neighbour. Refrain from strife, and thou shalt diminish thy sins.

O my Saviour, grant that by Thy example, I may learn to suffer in my person, in my honour, and in my worldly goods, rather than by seeking revenge, to endanger the loss of my soul, by losing Thee, my ever blessed Redeemer, and Thy upholding and strengthening grace.



Thursday after Sixth Sunday.

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

St. Matthew, v. 23, 24.



OD will accept of nothing at my hands, if I am burdened with debt of any kind to my neighbour. This conviction ought to impress upon my mind the duty of restitution, and the necessity of looking well to my way, whether my neighbour hath ought against me. There are

other debts besides debts of money, and some of these press heavily on the soul, and prevent its ascent to God.

I may not be guilty of the grosser acts of robbery of my neighbour ; I may not have taken his ewe lamb, nor deprived him of his means of obtaining his living, nor grossly slandered and taken away his good name ; but I may have withheld what was his due, I may have attributed ill motives, or I may have accused him of faults, or I may have not given alms, I may have given him no credit for good intentions ; in all these, and in many more ways, I may have injured him in thought or word ; and for all these I ought to make restitution, according to the several circumstances. I ought to seek to make restitution and reparation to my neighbours, with a view not only to their good, but for the clearing and purifying of my own conscience, making it fit to appear before the Lord. Another way, or department of this same act of restitution, is the entertaining and shewing proper gratitude and thankfulness for acts of kindness either intended or performed for me, and to make suitable returns of love to those who love me. All these things have to be weighed, and set right, before I can venture to present my whole self—body, soul, and spirit,—as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God.

It makes thy task of self-examination no easy one, O my soul, when thou hast to search into all these particulars ; but thou must consider the price which was given for thee. Consider thy value, and hesitate not to spend thy utmost strength in keeping that which is committed unto thee ; which it took the blood of that one, full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice to redeem. Thou approachest the altar, there to continue a remembrance of that Sacrifice

of our blessed Saviour, and to partake of what become to the faithful His Body and Blood. Consider first whether thy brother hath ought against thee; if he has, go thy way; clear thyself of that debt, and then mayest thou cast thyself before the altar of thy God; thou mayest throw thyself at the feet of thy Saviour, and say, Behold me, Lord! I offer myself unto Thee; I beg to be wholly Thine; grant me the help of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may so purify my soul as to fit it to be presented holy, acceptable unto Thee. Grant that I may never sin against Thee by ceasing to pray for my neighbour, or by withholding from him his due; but make me very careful to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before Thee, my gracious God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Friday after Sixth Sunday.*

And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.—2 Samuel, xii. 13.

CONSIDER the aged prophet sent to rebuke King David for his sin in the matter of Bathsheba. Nathan speaks the parable of the ewe lamb; but the king is not touched; his anger is kindled against the oppressor, but he sees not his own fearful sin in the parable. Nathan stops his threat of vengeance against the offender by gravely saying, "Thou art the man," and then denounces a fearful judgment against David and his house, on account of adulterous crimes and tyrannical oppression of which he had been guilty.

David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against

the Lord. He saw at once his sin, and he repented ; and we know that he brought forth fruits meet for repentance, because we read of the humble submission with which he met the death of his child, which was part of the judgment sent by God, as a punishment of the sin. I know that David's repentance was bitter ; he poured out his soul in the fifty-first Psalm, where he acknowledges his wickedness, and says, that his sin is ever before him ; he confesses that his sin is only against God, and he piteously entreats Him to cast him not away from His presence, and take not His Holy Spirit from him.

Let me consider the nature and effect of true penitence which is so necessary to one who has sinned and comes short of the glory of God.

God sends His messenger to warn me ; it is either the voice of conscience, or the voice of the preacher, or the words of a friend, or some such warning voice, which comes like Nathan, and either directly or indirectly shews the wickedness of which I am guilty ; this voice goes to my heart, I am convinced, I see my sin ; I am ashamed, and cry out, "I have sinned against the Lord." This confession of guilt is only the commencement of the repentance, which consists not in words, nor in a single act, but in a series, a continuance of sorrow and penitence ; and cries for pardon, and strivings, and groans that cannot be uttered. I judge myself, I condemn myself, I try to punish myself, by fastings and self-denials, and watchings, and prayers, and tears ; sometimes God may send His own punishment, and then my self-inflicted ones may be less needed, but nothing that I can do can reconcile me to God ; though my deeds may place me in a position to receive His eternal favours. No, I must confess my

sins, for He is faithful and just to forgive my sins ; I must lay open my wounds in order to obtain a cure from the Lord. I feel that I am not a judge in my own case of the nature and extent of the evils of my soul, I therefore fly to my best earthly friend, I lay my conscience open to him, I ask his advice, his prayers ; and he assists in probing my wounds, and in applying the remedies which God has ordained. But I walk on in fear and trembling, for I have sinned against the Lord ; and though I repent, and walk as a penitent, and humble myself all my days, yet I fear to commit another sin ; I am set in the midst of many dangers and temptations ; I fear lest I should not carry myself upright, and I do not look to finish my work of repentance, until I have finished my course in this life.

Oh, may I go on increasing in penitence for my many sins, remembering that nothing that is excellent is wrought suddenly, and desiring earnestly to bring my penitence to the excellent end of living a holy life close to God, and in continual recollection of the intercession of His dear Son.

My soul, in thy efforts after the fruits and benefits of repentance, consider the prayers and groans and sighs of Christ, Who for eighteen hundred years and upwards has never ceased His intercession for thee ; that repentance of thine was bought for a price, oh, let it be sincere and lasting and perfect ; let not the intercession of Christ be fruitless, count not the Blood of the Cross an unholy thing ; take the light yoke and easy burthen of Christ upon thee, and look onwards to the glorious reward of heaven ; look up to that heavenly Jerusalem, and to the throne of the eternal Majesty : does not that consideration make all appear easy to thee ?

Heaven would be cheaply won were even this

life to be expended in nothing but continual labours and miseries, the loss of a right hand, of a right eye, of the first-born of thy love ; but thou hast only to obey God, to keep His commandments ; to repent and amend. Who would not repent for this ? O my Lord, look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me to the way everlasting.



Saturday after Sixth Sunday.

But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.—2 Samuel, xii. 23.



HERE is much to meditate upon in this history of the death of David's son, which Bathsheba bare unto him. First, I must remember that the sickness and death of the child was a visitation sent by God as a punishment for David's enormous crime. David was sensible of the punishment ; he felt it most acutely as such ; the description of his grief is simple and affecting. He besought the Lord, he fasted, he lay upon the ground, he would not be persuaded to relax in his supplications, he refused to be comforted ; hoping that his grief might appease the Divine vengeance, and that God would spare his son. But it was not so ; for on the seventh day the child died ; then David, contrary to the expectations of his servants, who from his former grief thought that the child's death would bring him to despair, rose from the ground ; he put off his mourning apparel, resumed his serenity, and by his entire submission to the decrees of the Almighty, shewed that he put him-

self entirely into His hand, and acknowledged the wisdom and justice of His visitation. His prayers had not been answered according to their own tenor, but they were answered according to the mercy and wisdom of God. The child was taken, but peace and resignation were given to David ; he knew that the beloved one of his heart was in the safe custody of God, and that though the eye of him who had seen him, should see him no more ; yet that he would be enjoying the rest and calm peace of the eternal mansions of the Most High, where he himself would join him in that blessed place, of which the sweet psalmist of Israel knew so well how to describe the joys.

My soul, thou oughtest to be prepared for every sorrow with which God is pleased to visit thee, so as to walk on, in thy earthly pilgrimage, with heart well braced and set to meet every trial as it comes upon thee.

First of all, thou oughtest to take any affliction as a punishment sent for thy sins, of which, alas ! thou mayest fix upon but too many which deserve such punishment ; when the affliction comes, (and earthly trials will come, and will make the frail, weak flesh to quiver under their grievous blows,) thou must prostrate thyself before the Lord ; weary Him with prayers and importunities ; fast, watch and pray, for who can tell whether God will be gracious unto thee : but if the child die (my soul, thou art afflicted at the very thought,) then arise, God's will is shewn, thy prayers have not been answered literally, but be sure and very confident that they are heard in the way that is best for thee, and though thy human nature weeps, and smarts under God's visitation, yet thou wilt bless the Lord, Who has chastened and corrected thee, but has not given

thee over unto spiritual death. When any such visitation comes upon thee, be prepared to walk humbly with thy God; remember thy sins; think on God's justice, but more on His mercy; rely upon his promises; see the Redeemer's Blood poured over thy loved one, the everlasting arms wrapped round his loved form; trust him wholly in the keeping of the Almighty, Who, if He sees fit, will hear thy prayers; if not, thou wilt have treasure in heaven that fadeth not away, and to which it will be one of the joys of heaven to be re-united; and thou wilt exclaim, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

In all time of our tribulation:

In all time of our wealth:

In the hour of death:

In the day of judgment:

Good Lord, deliver us.



Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.—Romans, vi. 22.

HOW am I made free from sin? By the Blood of Jesus. The disobedience of our first parents entailed the fearful curse of sin upon the whole race of man: we became altogether corrupt, and the whole history of the Old Testament is a record of the sins and miseries which were in the world. The law condemned, but did not remove, the evil; for the evil heart of man prompted him to continual acts of disobedience; and the his-

tories of the best men are but melancholy exhibitions of the frailty and weakness of our mortal nature.

But in the process of time there came One, Who, in the form of a man,—yea, of a poor weak man, without form or comeliness,—lived a hard life, full of toils and labours, of bodily and mental sufferings. “He wept,” “He sighed;” He was in an agony. He was betrayed, and scorned, and spit upon, and mocked, and scourged, and crucified! All these trials He suffered, shewing that He was a Man, tempted in all points like as we are. He was sinless; He was God Incarnate! This is the answer to the question—How am I made free from sin? The Sinless has died to free me from that bitter bondage; and having been baptized into fellowship with the gracious Saviour, being enlisted as one of His soldiers and servants, I am placed in such a situation as enables me to bring forth fruit unto holiness.

Here I am, then, a servant of Jesus Christ, having renounced all fellowship with the works of darkness. A servant is at the beginning unknowing of his duties, and at first finds them irksome; he commits many faults, and has many misgivings about his duty; but if he sincerely wishes to do his duty; if he is awakened to a sense of the state of responsibility in which his master has placed him, he will frequently apply to that master for advice and assistance. His master is kind: the servant loves him more and more, strives more heartily to serve him, is more and more sorry when he fails and gives his master cause of offence; he goes on improving until his master takes him nearer into his confidence, until he calls him no more a servant, but a friend; and, finally, rewards him with a great benefit which has been promised at the end of faithful service.

My soul, dost thou see in this thy position? and dost thou realize thy duty towards that gracious Saviour, Who has freed thee from the service of sin, and holds out before thee so glorious a prize? Thou must apply to thy God, to the Lord of all power and might, for strength to perform what appears easy, but is most difficult—the daily walk of Christian service—the routine of duty: to make a great exertion, and to perform a single act even of exalted holiness, is easier than the ever-recurring small service that God requires at the hand of ordinary Christians; to pray regularly at set times with devout and reverent attention is more difficult than to pour forth the soul in a lengthened petition when the feelings are excited into a state of fervour; and yet, my soul, thou must aim at a regular steady growth in holiness; thou must pray for the assistance of God the Holy Spirit, to supply the necessary nourishment for thy piety; and thou must supplicate God for the grace of perseverance, that thou mayest go on constantly striving for and aiming at the prize of the high calling, even everlasting life. The end of our exertions, the reward of our toil, is everlasting happiness in heaven,—there to dwell with God in the enjoyment of that ineffable communion, in the fruition of that holiness, of which the seeds have been sown in this present life. One sentence suffices to explain the bliss of heaven: *we shall live with God.*



Monday after Seventh Sunday.

For the wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans, vi. 23.

THE effects of one sin, that of our first parents, come constantly before my eyes; I see them recorded in Holy Scripture; I feel them in myself; I am sinful, and the wages of sin is death; I am a lost, dying, and perishing creature; this is my inheritance from Adam. But I am adopted into a better inheritance; I have had a gift, through the righteousness of One, and though of myself I can do nothing that is good, yet the obedience of One has supplied that which I lacked; I am accounted as righteous through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom I have now received the atonement. Now, I joy and rejoice in the mercy of my God through Jesus Christ, for I have been buried with Him in baptism, I hope henceforth to live unto Him in newness of life; the old man is crucified in me, and I most earnestly pray that the whole body of sin may be destroyed, so that I may live entirely unto God. But I must never forget that eternal life, and the way to attain that state of salvation, is the free unmerited gift of God. What is it that God bestows on me; what is this gift? It is Himself. He vouchsafed to bring me to the waters of Baptism; there He cleansed me, and fitted me to become a temple of the Holy Ghost; and although this sacred temple has not been kept in all the purity and holiness that such a sacred abode should maintain, so that it is not a fitting place for Him to dwell in, yet I pray Him to grant


me strength to exert those powers with which He has endued me in rooting out all evil inclinations and bad habits, and idle thoughts, and hasty words, and ill-considered actions, which so ruin and lay waste my inner man; and I entreat Him not to withdraw the precious gift which will lead me finally to everlasting life.

O Lord, Whose precious gift to me is so much above all that I can desire or deserve, grant that my whole self, being the casket in which so precious a treasure is deposited, may be so reverently accounted of by me that I may chase away from me all evil, and may strive to make myself wholly a receptacle of holy thoughts, and desires after spiritual things and heavenly aspirations, that at the last day I may be found acceptable in Thy sight, and may inherit this Thy gracious promise of eternal life.



Tuesday after Seventh Sunday.

I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with Me three days, and have nothing to eat.—St. Mark, viii. 2.

 HE people had followed Jesus into the wilderness: they had preferred attending upon Him, and receiving gifts of healing and restoration from all their miseries, to the nourishment of their bodies. I may in some degree bring before me the entire occupation to the mind that the preaching of our blessed Lord must have been. The divine truths uttered, and the divine Preacher, must have kept the eager listeners so in-

tent, that they did not remember their bodily wants. Our Saviour knew that as they returned, they would begin to feel the want of food, and "He had compassion on them." Here admire the tenderness of our loving Lord; yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him. The multitudes had taken no thought for their bodily nourishment; therefore our Lord, after feeding their souls with the Word of Life, and healing all their diseases, was pleased to provide for their corporeal sustenance, according to what He promised: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It is "in the wilderness," apart from the noise and hurry of the world, that I must go and look for Him, my dear compassionate Saviour. I must not expect that He will be accessible where business and pleasure strive together to dissipate men's minds from thinking of their God; but it is in the stillness of a solitary place, in the silence of my closet, in the hallowed precincts of the temple of the Lord;—there may I look out for Jesus, there will He approach me, there will He feed me with that heavenly food—the upholding and supporting grace of His Holy Spirit. But as the multitudes went forth to seek the Lord, even so must I recollect that He will not come unto me, unless I make some exertion to approach Him; and as the multitudes suffered from their attendance upon their Lord, so must I expect that certain personal inconveniences and self-denials may arise as I go to the Lord; but when I am with Him, I shall feel nothing but the delight of receiving and following His blessed precepts. O taste and see how gracious

the Lord is; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O fear the Lord, ye His saints; for they that fear Him lack nothing. My soul, thy lot is cast in the midst of the busy, bustling world; thou hast no time for those retirements and blessed opportunities of spiritual rest and refreshment, which some persons enjoy. God's good providence has ordered this; and thou must make thy rules and arrangements accordingly. Thou must follow Christ into the wilderness, by making a little wilderness within thee: shut out the world and retire into thyself; there meet thy Saviour in frequent recollection and mental prayers. He will have compassion on thee; He sees thy needs; He looks with an eye of pity on thee, hungering and thirsting for more frequent intercourse with Him; and He will feed thee with His hidden manna, lest thou faint in the steep and rugged path over which thou hast to pass unto thy eternal home.



Wednesday after Seventh Sunday.

And He commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to His disciples to set before them.—St. Mark, viii. 6.

BEHOLD our Lord standing surrounded by the multitude. I may imagine that His position was on ground rather higher than that on which the people were disposed around Him in groups. They could all look up to the compassionate Saviour Who felt such pity for their situation. The food for this great assemblage is brought;

it requires no great attendance of persons to bear the load of provisions ; seven loaves are all that they have, and these are brought unto Him ; He gives thanks ; for the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, of things visible and invisible, supplies everything which we enjoy, and to Him we must acknowledge the blessing ; He breaks the bread, and gives it to His disciples, who distribute it to the people. All eat and are filled, and the fragments which remain fill seven baskets. I must remark that our blessed Lord used the bread that they had at hand ; He did not create a large supply, but infinitely extended that which they possessed, until it not only filled seven thousand people, but there was enough of the fragments left to fill seven baskets. In this, as in other miracles, our Lord extends His power just enough to serve the purpose ; there is no waste, if I may so say, of miraculous aid, and He ever uses the simplest means to accomplish His end. Our dear and only Saviour stands now in the midst of the members of His Church, and He dispenses His heavenly good things just in the measure they are required. He holds out the Holy Scriptures, from which I am fed and nourished by example, by reproof, by instruction in righteousness ; He holds out the ordinary means of grace, prayer, preaching, public worship, these contain the bread of life, and are to be received with thanks ; but above all, He holds out the extraordinary and special means of grace, the holy sacrament of His Body and Blood, in which He Himself vouchsafes to visit us, and to be partaken of by us, if we are living in faith and charity. He says, I am the living Bread that came down from heaven, if any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever, and the Bread that I give is My Flesh, that I give for the life of the world. Whoso

eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life.

My soul, endeavour to be always with Thy Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He will constantly supply thee with that heavenly food which is necessary to prevent thy fainting while proceeding on thy pilgrimage. Receive eagerly the Holy Scripture, from which, if thou study it with prayerful attention, thou wilt be ever deriving food, calculated in its strength to thy advancement on thy Christian course; but before and beyond all things seek to receive the true Bread of heaven in the holy Eucharist. Thou art fainting, discouraged; thy sins are many, thy difficulties great; the world clings round thee, thou hast not strength to proceed; call out to thy Saviour; prostrate thyself before His altar; beseech Him to strengthen and refresh thee with the holy life-giving food, which to the faithful and penitent is His holy Body, His most precious Blood; He will hear thee, and will give Himself to thy earnest faith and true penitence.

Oh, how sweet is Thy Spirit, O Lord, Who to the end Thou mightest shew forth Thy sweetness toward Thy children, dost vouchsafe to feed them with the Bread that is full of sweetness, even that which cometh down from heaven. What creature under heaven is so beloved as the devout soul into which God Himself entereth to nourish it with His glorious Flesh. O unspeakable grace, O admirable condescension, O unmeasurable love, specially bestowed upon man!

But what return shall I make to the Lord for this grace, for love so unparalleled?

There is nothing else that I am able to present more acceptable than to offer my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it most unreservedly to Him.

Thursday after Seventh Sunday. 165

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, for I will gladly be with Thee.

This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto Thee.



Thursday after Seventh Sunday.

And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait. let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for His mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.—2 Samuel, xxiv. 14.



THE anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and David was made the instrument of their punishment; the Lord moved him to number the people. David therefore persisted against the advice of Joab, and his chief captains, in numbering Israel and Judah; which was not an act for the good of his subjects, but merely to minister to his own pride and vain glory. But when the deed was done, the heart of David smote him, for God sent the prophet Gad to rebuke him, to offer three modes of punishment for his choice,—a seven years' famine, three months' pursuit by his enemies, or three days' pestilence. David was sorely perplexed, but he had experienced the goodness and loving mercy of the Lord; he knew also the un pitying relentlessness of man, and he chose rather to cast himself upon His God; God sent pestilence. I remark here how God makes use of the sins of an individual as a means of punishing nations. The Israelites were punished through the presumptuous pride of David. How do I know, if I fall into sin, whether the Lord will not set me up, in my humble

sphere, as an instrument of executing this just retribution upon sinners? this is yet another consideration which ought to make my faults and sins more odious to me, they are sure to bring punishment upon myself; they are nearly certain of punishing more or less those with whom I have to do. But let me think again; my faults bring punishments with them. As surely as I sin, or as I commit any error, so surely is the justice of God certain to come upon me, and to punish me, either in this world or in the next: then may I say with David, I am in a great strait, but it is because of this certainty of punishment; and I would say unto the Lord, besides beseeching Him not to give me into the hands of men, Lord, in this life—not in the next. O punish me here, that I fall not into eternal condemnation in the world to come.

My soul, thou mayest say with David, "Thy mercies are great." How great is the sum of all the loving-kindnesses of the Lord! Truly He is like a tender father, who punishes his children for their profit, not according to the greatness of their fault, but just so much as will serve for their correction. Even so, my soul, cling to thy God for correction; shrink not from His chastening; but remember that whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and that it is love alone that causeth Him to stoop to behold so despicable a creature as thou art. But thou hast the substance, of which David only saw the shadow; thou hast Jesus, the Sacrifice, the Mediator, Who, between thy sins and the offended Majesty on High, interposed His precious Body, nailed to the Cross. When thou sinnest, thou hast the constant intercession of Christ in thy behalf. O be joyful, my soul; thou hast indeed fallen into the hands of the Lord; and His mercies have been great. O Lord, destroy


me not by the direful pestilence of sin ; but behold, I place myself in Thy hands. Look upon the face of Thine anointed ; behold the propitiation for my sins, and be merciful to me a sinner, yea, the chief, the most wretched of sinners ! *Amen.*



Friday after Seventh Sunday.

Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

2 Samuel, xxiv. 18.

 HE word of the Lord went forth and the pestilence raged in Israel ; the angel of the Lord stood between heaven and earth with a drawn sword in his hand, to destroy Jerusalem ; but the Lord repented Him of the evil, He stayed the hand of the angel, and the plague ceased at the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. From what is subsequently said of Araunah, I may suppose him to have been a good man ; his willingness to part with his possessions shewed that he had the fear of God before his eyes. Thus is placed before my mind that vital doctrine of our holy religion, “that as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.”

David confessed his guilt, and interceded for his people : and Gad, the prophet, came and commanded him to raise an altar to the Lord in the place where the plague was stayed. An altar implies a sacrifice, and without going further in the narrative, where mention is made of the sacrifice, I must here stop and consider that each pestilence mentioned in Holy

Scripture is either stayed or atoned for by a sacrifice, or a type of a sacrifice. In the gain-saying of Core, Aaron ran in between the living and the dead with his offering of burnt incense, and the plague was stayed. In the murmuring of the people in the wilderness there was the great type of the great Sacrifice, on which whosoever looked who was afflicted by the plague, was healed; and David offered a sacrifice on the threshing-floor of Araunah, when the angel of the Lord had sheathed his sword after the terrible destruction of the people of Israel.

What does this bring before my eyes, but the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice once offered up-on the Cross.

The angel of the Lord is gone forth with hand uplifted to smite all the earth; all are dead in trespasses and sins; the deadly pestilence infects all the race of man; we are all tied and bound by the chain of our sins; we are so fast in prison that we cannot get forth: but the Lord hath repented Him of the evil; we are not to die. For, look up and lift up your head; there, nailed to a cross, His body stretched out so that thou canst tell all His bones, the blood streaming from the pierced hands, the nail-driven feet, the thorn-crowned head; there hangs the Sacrifice, the only propitiation which could appease the wrath of God, and stop the leprosy of sin.

O my soul, thou canst consider nothing that will render thee such fruit, as the atonement offered for thee by thy Saviour; every subject brings thee back to that one fact, which is the beginning and end of all thy Christian learning. If thou seekest for love, look on the Cross, and think that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in Him should not perish,

but have everlasting life. If for joy, think upon Him, Who endured the Cross, despising the shame, and now sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and there he is preparing a place for us. If thou seekest peace, look on the Prince of Peace, Who suffered that thou mightest be saved from thy sins. Dost thou want to cultivate long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, patience, charity? look upon Jesus in the judgment hall, Jesus bearing His Cross, Jesus praying for His enemies, Jesus promising paradise to the repentant thief, Jesus commending His mother to His disciple, Jesus yielding up His Spirit into the hands of His Father! It is finished; the Sacrifice is offered; the atonement is made!

O gracious Lord, grant that I may by a full and holy faith in Thy dear Son, lay hold upon the advantages promised to those who humbly trust in Him; and may I appropriate to myself a part of the tremendous Sacrifice once offered on Calvary!



Saturday after Seventh Sunday.

*Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord of
that which doth cost me nothing.*

2 Samuel, xxiv. 24.

LET me consider the great reason that David had to be thankful unto the Lord, for his deliverance and that of his people from the great strait which had threatened them all with destruction. I shall then see that David, in his thankfulness, would not consider that done unto God at all, if done at the cost of others, and without inconvenience to himself

When I find myself occupied all the day long in the duties which my calling devolves upon me, I regret having so small a portion to give to God, and I am told that if I perform my daily tasks as unto God, and take all my worldly duties in a religious spirit, that God will accept them as a sacrifice unto Himself; but I find that when a duty is irksome, I am apt to murmur and to complain. Now, if I am to perform all my duties unto God, the cheerful performance of those most irksome will be the most acceptable, it will be the offering of that which has cost me something. Let me henceforth resolve that all my doings shall be performed with this one object, and let my direct religious acts be done in the same spirit of self-denial. Let my alms be extended to my own inconvenience; let me give personal trouble, and suffer personal inconvenience, in the performance of my other devotional acts; attending public worship, relieving the distressed, and remembering those numberless small acts of kindness to my neighbour, which are all sacrifices that cost me something.

Above all, as an additional incitement not to offer unto the Lord of that which cost thee nothing, remember, my soul, the sacrifice of the only Son of God; what did it cost thy Saviour to redeem thee? Go over in thy imagination all the passages of His life, from His birth in the stable to His death on the cross; reckon up the vast sum of the personal suffering, the mental agony, the spiritual destitution of that adorable Saviour, and see what it cost to redeem thee; and to make the remembrance more striking, think that it was God, but in His human nature, Who suffered, and that thou, and such as thou, wert the objects of that vast sacrifice.

O my soul, repine no more at what thou hast to

do or to suffer, but rather rejoice when thou canst offer unto the Lord of that which has cost thee something. Rest not content until thou hast brought every thought and every action, every motion of thy will, every impulse into obedience to the will of God, until thou canst say unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, here am I, Thy most unworthy servant, behold upon the altar of Thy mercy I lay my whole self; Thou knowest what it has cost me. I am unworthy, Lord, deeply unworthy; but, Lord, accept me for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*



Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.—Romans, viii. 13.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God, in His undeserved mercy, has made me capable of using His good Spirit; for at my Baptism I had that precious gift conferred upon me, which was to enable me "to have victory, and to triumph against sin, the world, and the devil, and to become Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto my life's end." This gift of the Spirit does not give me a victory, but it supplies me with armour, and it gives me the power to do that which of myself were

impossible. The battle which I have to fight against sin in my own members is the most difficult one: the enemy is ever present; I cannot evade him; he watches my smallest actions; he takes advantage not of words only, but even of thoughts; and is ever ready to thrust at me in an unguarded moment.

Now, until I can bring my flesh into subjection to the Holy Spirit of God, I shall have to sustain this warfare; indeed it will not entirely end until my existence in this world ceases; but I may have so conquered and subdued the "strong armed man," that he will not venture an assault, if I do but keep vigilant.

The Scripture speaks strongly and plainly, that the mind unsubdued and set on worldly and fleshly objects, is on the road to eternal ruin. To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Mortify your members that are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence and covetousness, which is idolatry. These fearful crimes are the legitimate ending of what began only in an evil habit indulged, a seemingly innocent gratification unchecked, a thoughtless jest, or a heedless want of care and thought. Let me therefore beware, lest, while slumbering in supposed safety, these small things grow up into great sins, and I become carnal minded and hopelessly given up to the flesh.

It were vain to attempt to enumerate all the various ways in which I ought to mortify the flesh; the indulgence of appetite, in eating much, and of such things as are agreeable to the taste, may soon lead to gluttony; and though I may eat and thank God for His good things, yet must I know both

how to abound and how to suffer need in that respect.

The tongue is also a member liable to temptation ; every word must be watched, and carefully pruned. Silence is to the tongue what fasting is to the body, and is to be used as a means of bringing the whole under the guidance of God's good Spirit. The mortification of the eye, the touch, the smell, must be all attended to, and must be brought under the same Spirit, so that all may be used without being abused.

My soul, resolve to cultivate a mortified spirit ; carry thy cross with thee wherever thou goest ; and walk on with recollection, with calmness and quietness, and give thyself no rest from thy endeavours to bring thy flesh into subjection to that good Spirit, Who will ceaselessly abide with those whose hearts are pure and whose hands are clean.

LORD, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle : or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill ?

Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life : and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour : and hath not slandered his neighbour.

He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes : and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.

He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not : though it were to his own hindrance.

He that hath not given his money upon usury : nor taken reward against the innocent.

Whoso doeth these things, shall never fall.

Monday after Eighth Sunday.

Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.—Romans, viii. 15.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God is our Father; He has adopted me by baptism, has made me His child, an inheritor of His everlasting kingdom, and a partaker of the Salvation which is by Christ Jesus. And Who is this kind and forgiving Father Who has overlooked the corruption of my nature, and has given me so glorious an inheritance, allowing me to call Him Father, and Who daily sheds so many blessings around me? He is God, the all-powerful; He made the worlds; He framed the heavens, and fixed the sun and moon in their courses; He made this glorious and beautiful world, and all the wonders of nature by which we are surrounded; He made man, and gave him a body and members fitly joined together and perfect in every particular; He endowed him with reason, with senses, with every feeling that might contribute to his well-being and happiness; everything that is, from the leviathan which moveth in the waters, to the worm which creeps in the dust, are all His creation, and He sustains them in the wonderful and beautiful order in which we behold them moving around us.

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all !

This loving and benevolent Father is omnipresent; if I climb up to heaven He is there; if I go down to hell He is there also; if I take the wings of the morning and travel with the sun from one end of the firmament to the other, even there His hand shall lead me, and His right hand shall hold me. I mix in the world, in the busy assemblies of men, there is the eye of God ever upon me, watching the movements of His unworthy child; if I retire into my closet, there is the eye of the Omnipresent, He cares for me and never leaves me. He searches my most secret thoughts, for He is omniscient. He takes knowledge of everything, and He directs the counsels of mighty kings, and the mute communings of the lonely heart. This great and glorious Being deigns to be my Father; He enters into the smallest concerns of the lowliest of His people, and of me, too, lower than all. He is gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness.

He hath not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my iniquity. Like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him. The Lord is loving unto every man, and His mercies are over all His works.

He delighteth in mercy, He is the Father of mercies.

O my soul, what rest and peace there is in the thought that thou hast a tender Father Who is overlooking thee, and with infinite compassion guiding thee ! Become as a little child, and trust thyself, with the confiding simplicity of childhood, in the arms of thy everlasting Father. Beg Him

absolutely to dispose of thee, and feel no concern as to what is to befall thee, for He knoweth what thou canst bear, and He will not suffer thee to be tempted above thy strength.



Tuesday after Eighth Sunday.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.
St. Matthew, vii. 15.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am apt to think, that being a member of Christ's holy Church, I am safe from harm; that I am in no danger of being led into error while I go on adhering to the Church's rules, and hearing the teaching of her ordained ministers. This passage shews, that our blessed Lord knew that His disciples and those who followed in their steps, would be exposed to danger even while they were listening to those who they supposed were leading them in the right way. The false prophets would not be easily discerned from true prophets; they would be disguised in the clothing of those who are true sheep of our Lord's fold, and who listen to His voice; but this outward disguise would hide the ugly form of one who was seeking to devour and destroy those whom they professed to teach.

This shews that we are not to give ourselves to every kind of teaching which we meet with, even in the Church, unless it bears the test of its strict adherence to the Church's doctrine and discipline; we are to beware lest any man spoil us through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; for this purpose were our reasoning faculties given us, not to dispute against the doctrines delivered by the Holy Spirit in His Holy Word, but to try the spirits whether they be of God, and to see whether the fruits of the Spirit are manifest in them. Let me, therefore, be contented to be blindly led, not by man, nor by the traditions of men, but by God's Holy Spirit only; to that let me ever submit myself wholly, as an obedient child.

But these false prophets shall be known by their fruits; we are to watch those, who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned; and avoid them.

Let me not imagine this to be a small matter, or a trifling consideration; we know not how near we may be to those fearful "latter days," which precede the second Advent of our Lord; in those days false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will deceive many; how dreadful, if, when He our Great Judge shall come He find us led astray by one of these false prophets, for want of "taking heed!"

My soul, beware! thou knowest what things belong unto thy peace, let no man deceive thee; be ever on thy guard against the traditions of men; be ever anxious to be led by God's blessed Spirit, and live in constant watch against the temptations which are to assail men in the latter days; pray

with increasing fervour that thou mayest have strength to stand the shock of those temptations, and that when He shall come to judge the world, thou mayest be found among the elect; give not thyself weakly and suddenly to those who prophesy smooth things, and who speak a vision of their own heart, and not of the Lord; beware lest thou at last discover under the sheep's clothing, the ravening and grim form of a greedy wolf.

ARE your minds set upon righteousness, O ye congregation : and do ye judge the thing that is right, O ye sons of men ?

Yea, ye imagine mischief in your heart upon the earth : and your hands deal with wickedness.

The ungodly are froward, even from their mother's womb : as soon as they are born, they go astray, and speak lies.

They are as venomous as the poison of a serpent : even like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears ;

Which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer : charm he never so wisely.

Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths ; smite the jaw-bones of the lions, O Lord : let them fall away like water that runneth apace ; and when they shoot their arrows let them be rooted out.

Let them consume away like a snail, and be like the untimely fruit of a woman : and let them not see the sun.

Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns : so let indignation vex him, even as a thing that is raw.

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance : he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly.

So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous : doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth.

Wednesday after Eighth Sunday.

Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father Which is in heaven.

St. Matthew, vii. 21.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy, life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let me consider the entire unfruitfulness of a profession of love towards God, of reliance on His providence—even of faith in Him, unless the conduct is in every particular shaped in obedience to His law, which alone gives evidence of love. Unless the course of life is ordered in accordance with the decrees of His providence, and unless every action shews that there is a sense of the presence of that awful Being, Whom we presume to call, Lord, Lord! Let me think of the awful hypocrisy of pretending to call upon the mighty God with lip service, and of practically denying Him by the conduct of every-day life.

On the other hand, let me think of the life of a true believer in the Lord, of one who shews forth his religion by his works, and who brings forth the fruits of holiness. Such a one talks not freely and before every one of his religious feelings; they are too deep for utterance, excepting to the chosen friends of his bosom, who share his every sentiment. He goes on quietly and calmly in his own direct path,

looking only to see what the will of God is, as revealed in His Holy Word, or as indicated by His providential leadings. He is ever quiet before others, but shrinks not from avowing his principles if occasion calls for it. His love to God, and obedience to His blessed will, leads him to be very tender and charitable towards all men, and to perform small unobserved acts of kindness, with as much pleasure as he would do great things which would gain him the admiration of every one.

My soul, thou must observe from this, that the Christian course is ever a quiet and unobtrusive one: "deeds, not words," ought to be the motto of every true follower of Him, Who commanded the leper, "See that thou tell no man." Whatever thy external circumstances may be, whether in the hurry of worldly affairs, or in the more dangerous sphere of religious excitement, keep thy inward life calm, ever fit for communion with the High and Holy Lord God. Be ever mindful to avoid letting thy profession go before thy works,—always do more than thou sayest; but be always ascending nearer to God: let thy deeds grow higher and higher, until thy perfect obedience shews that thou art ever doing or seeking to do the will of thy Father Which is in heaven.

Resolve from this time, O my soul, to be especially careful not to use unreal words respecting thy spiritual concerns. Resolve never to express more than thou feelest, when speaking of holy things; but in thy prayers endeavour to raise both thy mind and thy words to the height which the addresses made to the King of kings, and Lord of lords ought to attain, and "strive to live more nearly as we pray."

Thursday after Eighth Sunday.

And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

1 Kings, xvii. 7.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our heavenly Father causeth His sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and sendeth His rain on the just and the unjust; for the wickedness of Ahab and of the Israelites God sent the drought; but the righteous Elijah suffered thereby; nevertheless, by a miracle, God mitigated the sufferings of Elijah, He sent ravens to feed him, and the waters of the brook Cherith refreshed his fainting spirit. The servant of the Lord had meat to eat, of which the wicked and worldly-minded knew not, but that wickedness itself was the means of depriving Elijah of his sustenance, for in time the brook dried up. The Holy Scriptures always describe the drinking of the waters of a brook, as the means of supplying refreshment to the body, as the living waters of God's grace give nourishment, and raise the drooping soul. "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God! My soul is athirst for God." I may imagine Elijah saying this, as, sitting on the sandy bank of the little stream, and watching the rapid decrease of its waters, as they stole along like a silver thread through

their rugged and stony bed, he mourned over the sins of Ahab, and the departure of the Israelites from their faith in the Lord their God. He thought on their temporal suffering, but much more he mourned over their spiritual destitution, of their holy altars defiled, of their worship of idols and vain gods; and his heart turned with higher gratitude to the one living and true God, Who had dealt with him so mercifully, Who was even now afflicting His children for their profit.

But after a while the brook dried up: may it not be even so with me? I am placed in a situation to partake freely of the means by which God usually imparts His grace. He has led me forth beside the waters of comfort; but I am not profiting as I ought to do by His goodness; how know I that He will not, for my sins, cause a cessation of the rain of His grace, and restrain the dew of His blessing from falling upon me? How know I that for national sins we may not all be deprived of the blessings and privileges which we all now so richly enjoy, and which, alas, we so misuse?

O my soul, meditate earnestly upon the infinite blessing of having the grace of God so freely imparted unto thee, that it may create a longing after its continuance, and cultivate that entire faith and trust in God, that even when He shall see fit to "dry up the brook," thou mayest entertain a sure confidence that He will provide for thee in a way which thou knowest not of.

Let these meditations create a longing for and yearning after God and His life-giving Spirit. Seek Him early, thirst for Him, long after Him, and see the barrenness and dryness of thy spiritual existence without Him. Thou wilt have to go through the vale of misery in this world; if it be so, use it as a

well; thou wilt find in every occasion a means of acquiring fresh supplies of grace, and then the pools will be to thee full of water, yea of that living water which shall spring up into everlasting life.

Grant, O gracious Saviour, that the time may come when I may never thirst, but that I may be so entirely satisfied with Thy blessed presence that I may live in continual and blissful contemplation of Thy ineffable glories, to which blessed state bring me in Thy own good time, O my Saviour.



Friday after Eighth Sunday.

*And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the
cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord.*

I Kings, xvii. 16.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When the brook was dried up, and the means of sustenance cut off, still the Lord was with Elijah, and He directed him to repair to Zarephath, where a widow woman was to sustain him. The king and his company had no rain, and they suffered from the want of provision, but the man of God had meat enough. The birds of the air fed him, and then a poor widow woman, whose only store was a handful of meal, and a little oil in a cruse. The mighty God puts down the mighty from their seat, and ex-

alteth the humble and meek. He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich He sendeth empty away. The poor widow had no means of replenishing her vessels with provisions ; she had determined to eat and to die, but the man of God commanded her to make him a cake ; and though she might have feared that her bounty to the stranger would have deprived her and her son of their last morsel, yet she believed the assurance of the prophet, and according to her faith so was it done unto her. The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail.

O blessed Spirit of our God, so is Thy divine influence infinitely extended unto those who trust in the promises made unto them. Thou art ever with the faithful soul which hungers and thirsts after righteousness. Thou dost not withdraw Thy ever ready help from those who seek it in faith and penitence, and Thou givest them of the oil which makes man's countenance cheerful, from contemplating the riches of Thy mercy ; and Thou givest them the bread which strengthens man's heart to endure the conflict which is ever going on against sin, the world, and the devil.

My soul, thou art apt to despair lest thy meagreness and low estate should be converted into utter want and destitution ; thy oil and thy meal are very low ; thou fearest that the little store may be soon consumed, and then thou diest. Fear not ; go and do as has been said, make use of the provision thou hast left ; and God will not suffer thy meal to waste, nor thy oil to fail, until He sends down that gracious rain from heaven, even His perpetual and evident presence among His elect people, which alone can refresh the weary souls who are hungering and thirsting after Him.

Saturday after Eighth Sunday. 185

Go on in faith ; remember the poor widow woman ; but do not think to receive the increase, unless thou exert thyself to make use of the supply thou hast already, however small it may seem to be.



Saturday after Eighth Sunday.

And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.

I Kings, xvii. 24.



GOD, Whose infinite love and mercy gives to Thy unworthy servants more than they can either desire or deserve, send to me, the most unworthy, Thy holy life-giving Spirit, that I may profitably meditate, and bring forth fruit acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

How blessed is the occasion which causes us to discern the hand of God, and to acknowledge it of a truth !

The poor widow woman imagined, when her son died, that Elijah was the instrument sent to chastise her for a sin which seems to have rested on her conscience ; her words implied a reproach to the prophet, who had partaken of her meal and of her oil. And when she saw the lifeless body of her child stretched before her, she seems to have forgotten the former miracle in her present calamity. But her deep grief, and the forgetfulness of her faith, which that seemed to have brought upon her, were removed when she saw her dead son restored to life. She then perceived that he who could raise the dead

must be a man of God, and she acknowledged the truth of the word of the Lord uttered by His lips.

In God's dealings with men, it is not always permitted to our blindness and ignorance to see and know the reasons for which He acts.

Here is exposed to us the working of God's providence; and I ought, in the instances which occur both to myself and to others, to have the faith to know that in the unseen workings of Providence there are as many causes for rejoicing, and for acknowledging the word of the Lord, as when the widow received her son back again.

I suppose myself to be pressed down by a heavy calamity; I writhe under the scourge of the Lord, I feel every stroke with renewed agony; but I perceive not the change which God is working thereby in my soul; a man of God prays for me (the effectual fervent prayer availeth much); and when I find that which was dead restored to life, when "my darling is saved from the dogs," then I see the hand of the Lord, and I acknowledge the justice, and the love, and the mercy of His visitations.

My soul, prepare thyself for the day of affliction; the prophet is with thee; thy oil and thy meal are daily supplied: thou requirest a test whereby to prove thee; and thy heart's darling will be demanded of thee. Give it up to the Lord in faith; thou seest how He deals with His people. And when thou hearest the joyful words, "Thy son liveth," thou wilt lift up thy heart in joy and gratitude, and say, Now know I of a truth that the word of the Lord is in thy mouth, O thou who hast instructed and led me into the way of truth.

Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.

I Corinthians, x. 1.

PREVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name; and finally, by Thy mercy, obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The apostle brings before us the remembrance of the children of Israel; how, oppressed, afflicted, and weighed down in the land of Egypt, they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He heard them in their distress. He Himself vouchsafed to be their guide. He promised them safe possession of a glorious and fertile land, flowing with milk and honey; and He spread out a cloud for a covering in the day, and fire in the night season.

But before they were to reach that pleasant land, they all had to pass through the sea. How was this difficult passage of the sea accomplished? Even by a miracle; that which would have been impossible with man, was possible to God: He divided the Red Sea in two parts, and His chosen people walked through on dry land.

We, the Israelites of the new covenant, are all conceived and born in sin; we are bond-servants and slaves to sin in the land of Egypt, even this perishing and naughty world. Our God promises to release us from this bondage, and to bring us to

a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands ; but before we enter that pleasant place, we have to pass through the waters of Baptism, to be purified from the defilements of the land of Egypt. We shall then be fit to join the glorious band of apostles, prophets, and martyrs, with whom we have been baptized in the cloud, and in the sea ; with whom we are journeying towards the blessed land of promise ; and with whom we all eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink.

But, my soul, thou canst make a closer application of this passage to thyself. How long hast thou lived in the world, surrounded by its temptations, and led away by its allurements, and hast forgotten the pleasant land of promise, even the Jerusalem that is above—the heavenly Canaan ! Thy God has guided thee by the motions of His good Spirit to seek for the land flowing with milk and honey ; but to attain to it, thou hast to pass through the sea ; thine enemies, thy besetting sins, are behind thee ; thou canst not turn back ; thou hast to encounter the troubled waters of affliction—the waves of strife and division, the deep waters of the proud ; thou must go boldly on, and struggle through the deep mire, where no ground is, and at last attain the promised land. How heavenly is the stillness and quiet of that place of verdure and of dew, after buffeting with the rude waters ! So it will be with thee, O my soul, after having finished thy contest with the world, the flesh, and the devil ; having overcome thy own evil nature, and the enemy who is ever watchful to destroy thee, thou wilt take refuge in the safe resting-place of the will of thy Lord ; thou wilt seek for nothing but Him ; thou wilt hope for nothing but Him ; thou wilt love nothing but Him.

But thou hast not attained this state ; thou must

continue to buffet with the waters of this life, in the blessed hope and assurance that the time will come when thou wilt be received into the heavenly country, if only thou persevere.

SAVE me, O God : for the waters are come in,
even unto my soul.

I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is :
I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run
over me.

I am weary of crying ; my throat is dry : my sight
faileth me for waiting so long upon my God.

They that hate me without a cause are more than
the hairs of my head : they that are mine enemies,
and would destroy me guiltless, are mighty.

I paid them the things I never took : God, Thou
knowest my simpleness, and my faults are not hid
from Thee.

Let not them that trust in Thee, O Lord God of
hosts, be ashamed for my cause : let not those that
seek Thee be confounded through me, O Lord God
of Israel.

And why ? for Thy sake have I suffered reproof :
shame hath covered my face.

I am become a stranger unto my brethren : even
an alien unto my mother's children.

For the zeal of Thine house hath even eaten me :
and the rebukes of them that rebuked Thee are fallen
upon me.

I wept, and chastened myself with fasting : and
that was turned to my reproof.

I put on sackcloth also : and they jested upon me.

They that sit in the gate speak against me : and
the drunkards made songs upon me.

But, Lord, I make my prayer unto Thee : in an
acceptable time.

Hear me, O God, in the multitude of Thy mercy : even in the truth of Thy salvation.

Take me out of the mire, that I sink not : O let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up : and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Hear me, O Lord, for Thy loving-kindness is comfortable : turn Thee unto me according to the multitude of Thy mercies.

And hide not Thy face from Thy servant, for I am in trouble : O haste Thee, and hear me.



Monday after Ninth Sunday.

Now all these things happened unto them for examples : and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

I Corinthians, x. 11.

PREVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name ; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am living in the latter days, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of the Lord. I am therefore to live in a constant state of preparation for that great day, and to this end I ought to give attentive heed to all the lessons and admonitions contained in Holy Scripture. Among these,

none contains more awakening warnings than the history of God's own people, the children of Israel. They had experienced the tender mercy of God, in delivering them from their oppressors in the land of Egypt; they passed safely through the Red Sea, guided by the cloud which veiled the glorious presence of Him Who vouchsafed to deliver them; but they forgot these instances of mercy as soon as they felt any inconvenience; they lusted after the flesh-pots of Egypt; they murmured against the High God; they became idolaters; they defiled themselves by associating with the wicked nations through which they passed; they tempted the Lord in the desert; they murmured and were visited with a swift destruction.

Now all these things are written for my admonition; let me consider the sins pointed out, and see whether I am guilty of any of them.

Do I murmur against the dispensations of God's providence, or feel dissatisfied with my position in life? Do I give way to self-indulgence and too much carefulness for the things of this world? How am I then fit to meet my God and the Saviour Who, while on earth, had not where to lay His head?

Do I set up idols in my heart and think more of any creature than my Creator? Am I fond of the world, of riches, of pleasures, of fame? Do I allow my love for my family to obscure my vision of God? How am I then fit to meet the Almighty, the King of kings? Am I strictly pure in my thoughts, words, and actions; if not, how am I fit to meet the All-pure, All-holy?

Do I tempt Christ by murmuring, by discontent, by envying the spiritual privileges of others, or thinking meanly of my own? Do I think lightly

of my sins? and do I complain of the chastisements which those sins have richly deserved? How am I then fit to meet Him Who was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should have everlasting life?

O my soul, how canst thou meet thy God, laden as thou art with sins and infirmities, how canst thou stand face to face with Him Whom thou hast treated with even more ingratitude than did the murmuring Israelites; for the Red Sea, thou hast the waters of baptism; for the manna, thou hast the bread of life; for the brazen serpent, thou hast Christ Himself.

Oh, tread not under foot the Son of God; count not the blood of the covenant an unholy thing; do not despise unto the Spirit of grace! Lift up thine eyes unto the Son of God hanging upon the Cross; let that sight cure thy plague, and inspire thee with a vehement desire and longing to acquire strength for thy journey into that pleasant land where thou wilt have the fulness of joy and pleasure for evermore.

O LORD, heavenly Father, give me grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with a pure heart and mind to follow Thee, the only God. O Saviour of the world, Who by Thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed me, save and help me, I humbly beseech Thee. *Amen.*



Tuesday after Ninth Sunday.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

I Corinthians, x. 13.

PREVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This passage is both a warning and a comfort to me; a warning that I must be always liable to temptation and sorrow in this world; and a comfort, inasmuch as God apportions temptation to the strength of each individual, and gives no more than each can endure, with the help of His grace.

The beginning of all sin is through temptation; our first parents yielded to the suggestions of the great enemy of mankind—emphatically called the tempter, and thus brought sin into the world, with all the catalogue of miseries and sorrows which have since afflicted the human race.

Let me remember that our great enemy is always walking to and fro upon the earth, seeking occasion to tempt all the frail human beings whose infirmities and sins he notes, in order to bring them to their fall. Let me, therefore, stand girt with the spiritual armour on the right hand and on the left, that I

may be able to withstand all the fiery darts of Satan. I must keep a strict watch over myself; I must mark the beginnings of failings, and be specially on my guard respecting them; I must use my utmost endeavours to withstand every movement towards evil; I must not shrink with cowardice from conflict with the temptation, but I must manfully fight against it, as against my bitterest foe.

I must watch, I must pray, I must examine myself, leaving no corner of my soul unsearched; for temptation creeps in at the smallest opening, and a trifling weakness unheeded and indulged will grow into a great sin.

Faint not, my soul, when surrounded by difficulties, by temptations; thy God is faithful. He will not allow thee to be tempted above that thou art able; He will give thee a means of escape, and will grant thee a glorious victory over thy temptation, if thou join to thy watching and prayer a determined will, and endeavour to overcome it.

My soul, when thou art exceeding sorrowful, in the midst of thy temptations, remember thy Saviour. He was in all points tempted as we are, only without sin. Oh, follow His blessed example, resist the devil manfully; watch and pray; and though the flesh be weak, yet God will see that the spirit is willing, and will renew thy strength for the combat.

Never despair; if thy temptations continue, pray the more fervently, the more frequently; leave all to God. He is faithful, and He will direct all things to such an issue as thou wilt be able to stand.

O GOD, Who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand

upright; grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Wednesday after Ninth Sunday.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.—1 Corinthians, x. 12.

PREVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name; and finally by Thy mercy obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When I count over the many blessings and privileges I enjoy; my birth, my nurture, protection, guidance; my education, religion, civil rights; the gifts of God's grace, of nature, of fortune; my redemption, regeneration, and many calls and opportunities of serving God; I am overpowered with gratitude to the gracious Lord Who has done such things for me. I am in the habit of daily using God's gifts, whether of nature or of grace; I go regularly to church, have frequent opportunities of receiving the holy communion of His precious Body and Blood, and live on, receiving these inestimable blessings, I fear, too much as matters of course: I am a creature of habit, and even the most blessed privileges are used more often now as matters of habit than with a devout realization and application of their efficacy to healing the hurts and bruises of

my soul. I am enjoying that which places me above the level of many of my fellow Christians.

This is a fatal and most dangerous state of inactivity and sleepiness. I must up, and be doing; I must take heed, lest I fall; I am standing on the edge of a precipice, over which the devil will certainly push me if I do not take active measures, not only to secure my position, but to advance still higher on the steep and rugged path which leads to eternal life. I must not be high-minded, but fear.

My soul, how canst thou so act as to stand, not only in thy own opinion, but in deed; not only without danger of falling, but girt about with the whole armour of God? Watch and pray. Watch against thyself; guard thy impulses, thy startings, thy intentions, thy attempts, thy goings out and thy comings in, thy sitting down and thy rising up, and then pray; be ever active in applying the merits of thy blessed Saviour's Passion to correct, to amend, to wash away, to purify, to enlighten. Do nothing as a matter of course, but put thy strongest will to the work, and pray urgently and most fervently for the grace of God's holy Spirit to sanctify and enliven all thy doings. Still live on in fear; fear thyself, as thou seest how impure and imperfect thou art in all thy ways, and lean more entirely on thy Saviour, through Whom alone thou canst stand before God, and by Whose blessed intercession alone thou canst hope to be counted worthy to receive the prize of thy high calling in Him, even life eternal.



Thursday after Ninth Sunday.

Give an account of thy stewardship.

St. Luke, xvi. 2.

DREVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name; and finally, by Thy mercy obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A stewardship being an office which implies much trust, and a steward being a person to whom the most valuable possessions of the master are oftentimes entrusted; I must consider what the parable means, in these words, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

By the rich man is meant God; by the steward, a person to whom God entrusts certain of His gifts. Let me consider what are God's gifts, if indeed I can enumerate what are without number and without price. I may divide God's special and individual gifts into moral, intellectual, and spiritual. All these are given for special purposes, to be used and improved; and a great day of account is to come, in which each will have to give an account of the things committed to his trust.

What awful words are these then: "Give an account of thy stewardship!"

Behold me standing before my Master, about to give account for all the talents committed to my trust. He says, "I placed thee in the world, gave thee a healthy body, parents and friends to love and

care for thee, how hast thou requited Me in this particular? Thou hast not respected thy superiors as thou oughtest to have done, thou hast often resisted their authority, and disobeyed their laws. I gave thee a clear mind, perseverance, good temper; how little hast thou used thy mind, how slothful hast thou been upon the most trifling excuse, and how hast thou sullied thy natural temper, by unseemly impatience, or weakly yielding to the importunities of others!"

Thou hast talents (), how thrown away! how imperfectly improved, or entirely neglected!

But here is the worst part of the picture; thy spiritual gifts—the gifts of the Holy Spirit, neglected, cast aside; means of grace slighted, opportunities unemployed, communions without fruit, prayers not attended to!

O, fall down before the Lord God, and beseech Him to give thee a little more time, that thou mayest make more use of His inestimable gifts; use more diligence in searching out where thy defects lie; search out what are thy gifts, and then set to the work, and labour without ceasing in thy Lord's service; that when He comes and asks an account of thy stewardship, thou mayest be enabled to render up some talent which has been increased tenfold.

Lord, of myself I am nothing; I can do nothing; but Thy power is sufficient for me. O grant me such grace, such perseverance, such faith, such love, such obedience, that, though the very least and lowest of Thy servants, I may yet be allowed to retain my place, if only in the lowest room.

Friday after Ninth Sunday.

Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.—1 Kings, xix. 7.

REVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name; and finally, by Thy mercy, obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Elijah the prophet was obliged to flee for his life from the threats of the wicked Jezebel; he went a day's journey in the wilderness, and then sat down exhausted and dispirited; he begged of the Lord to take away his life, for, although he was a prophet, he could not bear up against his misfortunes better than those who had gone before him.

But Elijah was beloved of the Lord; and the Lord careth for His servants. He caused a gentle sleep to steal over the wearied senses of the exhausted man, and He sent an angel to set food before him. Elijah ate and drank, and his soul was satisfied. He laid him down again; and again the angel roused him, commanding him to eat, and reminding him of the length of the journey which he was about to undertake, for which his strength was, humanly speaking, inadequate. He ate and drank, and he went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God.

How does this history bring before me my own pilgrimage on earth! that world, in which each

soul wanders in loneliness and solitude, is the wilderness in which I am advanced a day's journey. I am often perplexed and wearied by cares, not knowing exactly where my duty lies; I am harassed by the claims which press upon me; I am grieved as I watch my own course—how slowly I advance, how often I fall back, how some sins are appearing again in spite of often repeated efforts to overcome them; how sickness and sorrow come upon me, and how dryness and hardness of spirit make me fear for my salvation. I sink down, worn out by my sorrows and struggles, and exclaim, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life."

Faint not, thou weary soul; behold, the angel of the Lord points out to thee a table, spread in the wilderness; approach and see, that bread which is set thereon is the Bread of Life which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. This Bread is the Flesh of Him Who came down from heaven to take upon Him our nature; He travelled the same road in this our wilderness, and He laid down His life that we might be saved. He had compassion on our infirmities, and He left this testament in His blessed Body and Blood, that we might be perfectly united unto Him, and receive strength to follow on to the end of our pilgrimage, until at length, in the strength imparted by Him, we arrive at Horeb, the mount of the Lord, where with angels and archangels, and all the blessed company of heaven, we shall praise our Lord, our God and Saviour, unto all eternity.

But, my soul, as the angel touched Elijah, awoke him out of sleep, and commanded that he should eat again, so be thou very careful, after partaking of the blessed communion of the Body and Blood of thy Lord, not to go to sleep in fancied possession

of the strength which once partaking of the heavenly food will not give thee; thou must go on receiving fresh strength, or thou wilt never reach the mount of the Lord; nor be fit to encounter all the perils and doubts which in this world are sure to come upon thee.

Thou must present thyself as often as the table of the Lord is spread, and there lay open thy sorrows before thy compassionate Saviour. Shew Him all thy griefs, beseech Him to come unto thee to heal thee, to strengthen thee; and though thou art unworthy that He should come under thy roof, yet beseech His infinite compassion to make thee less unworthy to impart Himself to thee; to give thee His Flesh, which is meat indeed, and His blood, which is drink indeed.



Saturday after Ninth Sunday.

What doest thou here, Elijah?—1 Kings, xix. 13.

PREVENT me, O Lord, in all my doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further me with Thy continual help, that, in all my works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, I may glorify Thy holy Name; and finally, by Thy mercy, obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This awakening question is one that I may well put to myself. What doest thou here? Has the still small voice of the Lord aroused me? or have I not been listening to His warnings? I expected to hear the voice of the Lord in an awful and terrible manner, if I was running on in an evil course; but

as I neither heard the wind, nor felt the earthquake, nor saw the fire, I fancied myself safe: but no, the still small voice of the Lord whispered to me, what doest thou here?

Gracious Lord, how merciful art Thou in Thy dealings with Thy most unworthy servant! Thou, out of Whose mouth goeth a consuming fire, by Whose word I might be annihilated and brought to nothing, art ever ready to recall me to my duty, by the still small voice of conscience, which, if I quench not the spirit of grace which Thou hast implanted in me, will be my truest, surest monitor.

What do I here? Alas, alas! nothing well,—nothing as I ought. I am walking on, engrossed by the pursuits of the world, occupied in my family, turned aside by pleasure, by anxiety for gaining the good opinion of others. I am shrinking from my most painful duties, by avoiding them, and making plausible excuses for substituting other and less pressing duties; I go into solitude to avoid meeting those whom I fear to encounter; but I am not doing my duty. No, I am acting cowardly, and must retrace my steps, face every peril, encounter every enemy, endued with much strength from the Lord. I must not leave my direct avocation in this world undone, on any pretext; but by cultivating the grace of recollection, and by doing every thing as under the immediate eye of the Lord, I must sanctify every word and work, never falling away, never going to sleep; for the still small voice will not always sound in my ear, if I go on sinning and repenting, and I may not always hear the words of the Lord, to recall me to myself.

My soul, if thou art awakened by this question of thy Lord, What doest thou here? consider what thou oughtest to be doing here. Thou art called

by God, elected by his free unmerited grace in the sacrament of Baptism; thou art a child of God by adoption. How oughtest thou to walk, in order to be worthy of so high a calling? Surely, instead of standing all the day idle, thou shouldst work with all thy might in order to obtain the prize of that high calling in Christ Jesus. Thou feelest thyself weak and insufficient for the work; but thou wilt be made strong by faith in Jesus, if thou hast but faith to stand under His cross, to be sprinkled by His most precious blood, to be purified by His gracious intercession, enlightened by His grace; then thou wilt be strong and very courageous to go on working, and satisfied not to see the fruits of thy efforts, in full faith that the day will come when the fruits will appear. Do thy diligence to perform the Lord's will in all things, and then will He impute to thee the merits of His dearly beloved Son, through Whom thou wilt be able to do all things.



Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.—1 Corinthians xii. 3.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

When I first read this text, it seems quite impossible that any one calling himself a Christian could deny that Jesus Christ is Lord. In a degree, those who have received the gift of the Spirit do confess

it; but not necessarily in all its fulness and reality. These few simple words contain a volume of Christian wisdom and knowledge, and they comprehend, when taken in their fulness, all the living principle of the Christian existence.

Jesus is our Lord, but how became He more especially the Lord of the true believer, how is He emphatically our Lord? By purchase. He bore our nature, took upon Him the burden of our flesh, poured out His life, and purchased us with the price of His most precious Blood. The light of nature would never lead us to believe in the stupendous facts of man's redemption; by grace alone we can believe, and by grace alone apply the belief to the healing of our own infirmities and sins. By the help of the Holy Spirit we see in the blessed Child, laid in the manger at Bethlehem, our God made man to redeem us; by that same Spirit, we see in His miracles, manifestations of God, and types of the miraculous healing, and raising, and feeding of our soul: by the Spirit, we see in the Eucharistic elements His body broken, His Blood poured out for us; by the Spirit, we see Him raised on the Cross, stretching out His divine arms, as if to gather all His own into His bosom; we beseech Him to nail us with Him to His Cross; we entreat that the pure blood and water flowing from His wounds, may wash away all the spots of our souls, and we hear in His last cry, "It is finished," a ratification of that purchase which He made by His Blood and His sufferings. Let us, then, with St. Thomas, be no longer faithless but believing, and after having in devout adoration put forth our finger and touched His hands, and thrust our hands into His side, fall down at His feet, crying, "My Lord and my God."

O my soul, what more could be done for thee than has been wrought, by the redemption of thy soul by thy Lord and Saviour; and yet how lukewarm art thou in thy endeavours to purify thyself, so as to be a fitting temple for Him to dwell in. Lift up thyself in continued and earnest supplications for the grace of the blessed Spirit, to enable thee to realize more fully the blessings of redemption, and to give thee strength, to serve more perfectly thy Saviour, thy Lord, and thy God.

LET Thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Monday after Tenth Sunday.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
1 Corinthians, xii. 4.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

The Holy Spirit of God was imparted to me, and to all true Christians, at baptism.

On looking round upon all those with whom I am acquainted or with whom I associate, I see varieties of character and shades of difference, which make mixing in the world not unlike contemplating a motley and varied picture. Among those who are

knit together in the fellowship which each feels for other, when the great fact of our spiritual brotherhood is fully realized, I see varieties of temperament and character which are curious and even wonderful. In one I see the most ardent, high aspiring, active mind ; in another there is meekness, lowliness, and quiet ; one is all activity, another is all calm ; and yet the one great end and object of all is the same, all adore the same Lord and Father, all hang upon the same Saviour, all are endued with the same Spirit of grace.

I can picture to myself a person whose natural temperament is hasty, rash, overhearing ; some circumstance arouses that person to make active exertions to overcome his natural defects ; he prays that the Holy Spirit will assist his endeavours ; the contest between nature and grace is fierce and long ; the trials necessary to overcome the defects are very great, and yet by degrees grace triumphs. And behold the hot-tempered, hasty, rash person becomes meek and calm, considerate for others, distrustful of himself. Here grace has triumphed ; here the gift of the Spirit has been used with blessed effect ; the same effect will be traced in the operation of the Spirit upon an indolent, self-indulgent, easy-tempered person, who may be stirred up to make exertions, and may become active, zealous, self-denying, and pains-taking. These are some few of the ordinary changes wrought in men by the gift of the Spirit. There are extraordinary gifts, as of prophecy, discerning of spirits, working of miracles, and the like. Seeing, then, that there are such diversities of gifts, let me be very careful in judging of the conduct of my fellow-members in the Body of Christ, and let me so highly prize the inestimable gifts of the Spirit, as to be thankful if I am but possessed

of the last and lowest of them. We are all workers together with Him, our great Head. Let me always be thanking Him for His unspeakable gift, earnestly desiring to know the more excellent way, but working in the sphere allotted to me, using the gift which is my portion, and giving God thanks if He do but permit me to use it to His glory.

O LORD, my God, give me Thy grace to enable me to despise and cast away from me all the desires and lusts of the flesh ; and to cultivate those inestimable gifts of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, that I may walk in the Spirit henceforth for ever, and continue entirely devoted and given up to Thee, of Whose only gift it cometh that I can do Thee any true and laudable service. *Amen.*



Tuesday after Tenth Sunday.

And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it.—St. Luke, xix. 41.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity ; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

Our blessed Lord is journeying, surrounded by His disciples and the enthusiastic multitude, from Bethany towards Jerusalem ; He stops at the top of Mount Olivet, and contemplates the city, sitting in all the pomp and pride of its palaces and its temple, in the bosom of the surrounding hills. He gazes

upon the lovely prospect before Him ; the swelling hills adorned with the olive and the palm ; the bold rocks jutting out, and seeming to bid defiance to any hostile invaders who should dare to approach the fair city, which glitters and sparkles in the sun, like a lovely jewel set in a strong and iron-bound casket.

There she stood, the city of the great King, to whom messengers of peace had been sent, but she rejected them ; upon whom the Lord had showered down the choicest of His bounties, and she heeded them not ; to whom He sent His Son, and she knew Him not ! Our blessed Lord wept over her, for He saw that she was a fair place, the joy of the whole earth ; but He saw beyond the present time, when she would be guilty of blood,—of the Blood of her Saviour, Who now so lovingly wept over her ; and He saw the time approaching when she would be encompassed with foes, and after a desperate struggle would be levelled with the ground. The Lord longed for Jerusalem, He had a favour unto her ; but she would not turn unto Him ; and He, our God, wept over her in His infinite compassion and infinite prescience.

The Lord weeping over His own city, the habitation of His own peculiar people, presents an affecting picture to thee, O my soul ; for it indicates that He weeps over all His own who are given up to wickedness, who cast out their Lord and Saviour. Thou art His own child by adoption ; thou hast been made a holy temple to His service ; thy Lord would come unto thee, He loves thee ; but He regards thy present careless state, He foresees thy future bitter punishment. His omniscience knows that thy spiritual enemies will cast a trench about thee, and will leave no trace of thy spiritual life, if they once prevail against thee.

Resolve then, O my soul, to cultivate that carefulness about the one thing needful, that not only thy enemies will be unable to make any inroad upon thee, but that thou wilt not cause that poignant grief to thy beloved Saviour, which those occasion, who crucify Him afresh and put Him to open shame.



Wednesday after Tenth Sunday.

And He taught daily in the temple.

St. Luke, xix. 47.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity ; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

If I require any inducement to act up to the rules of our Church, this text would certainly furnish it. Jesus, our blessed Lord and Saviour, is in all things a perfect model, in that being perfect man He was obedient in all things to His Father's will ; He taught daily in the temple, and it was to those who were there daily assembled that He addressed His instructions. To the Jews this was no irksome duty imposed by the strictness of one of their priests, it was a part of their regular daily work ; and who would omit such a duty, if the great fact was realized, as the Jews did realize it, of the constant presence of God in the most holy place of their temple ? We have no longer their sacrifices to offer. Our Sacrifice is one full, perfect, and sufficient ; the rich fumes of the material incense are no longer wasted towards heaven, but our prayers are, in the presence

of the Most High, set forth instead. Our Sacrifice has been once, and once for all, offered upon the Cross, but we may join to it the sacrifice of ourselves, souls and bodies; but, inasmuch as our sins are ever before us, God has given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to His people (being penitent) the absolution and remission of their sins. How is it possible for me to consider all this and to neglect daily attendance in the temple of the Lord, such opportunity of attendance being one of my present blessings? It is a blessed and glorious privilege to enter into the sanctuary, and to lay aside for a short space the cares of the world! How strengthened and braced do I feel for my work, after that short half hour of communing with God! Can I call it a waste of time? O may I never be guilty of such a profane thought. It is ever a gain of time to me, as I come forth with renewed vigour, the promise of forgiveness ringing in my ear; the blessed consciousness ever upon me that Jesus was there.

My soul, remember that as Jesus taught daily in the temple, still does He continue to teach those who in humble, simple faith, frequent His courts, and take pleasure in raising their voices with those of the Church in the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise. Thou canst not see Jesus, but canst thou doubt the presence of thy loving Saviour, Who, after having shed tears of pity over thy coming desolation, has cast out the world and the world's traffic from thee, and then vouchsafes to teach thee daily?

Q HOW amiable are thy dwellings : thou Lord of Hosts!

My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into

the courts of the Lord : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young : even Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House : they will be alway praising Thee.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee : in whose heart are Thy ways.

Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well : and the pools are filled with water.

They will go from strength to strength : and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer : hearken, O God of Jacob.

Behold, O God our Defender : and look upon the face of Thine Anointed.

For one day in Thy courts : is better than a thousand.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God : than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

For the Lord God is a light and defence : the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall He withhold from them that live a godly life.

O Lord God of hosts : blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Thee.



Thursday after Tenth Sunday.

Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before Me? because he humbleth himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days.—1 Kings, xxi. 29.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

Ahab was entirely given up to work wickedness, he had “sold himself” to the wicked one, and was entirely unable to shake off the bonds and fetters of sin in which he was closely confined. This dreadful state of wilful and utter depravity was not the effect of ignorance of God, but was a blindness and hardness of heart brought upon himself, in spite of the warnings of the prophet Elijah; in spite of the miracles worked to shew forth the power of God; in spite of the chastenings dealt out by the Almighty hand, for the punishment of the wicked king and his depraved people. Ahab had sold himself; God was not in all his thoughts, the fear of God was not before his eyes; he despised the light, he hated every good thing.

The crowning iniquity, in the matter of Naboth and his vineyard, brought down upon the head of the unhappy king the vengeance of the Lord. The word of the Lord came to Elijah, and he was sent to denounce a fearful judgment upon Ahab and upon all his house. Then Ahab felt the hand of the Lord; the head of the mighty king cowered and bowed down before the stern dignity of the prophet of God; his heart quailed as he heard the

doom,—the curse of all his race; and he humbled himself, he put on sackcloth, and fasted, and went softly. This penitence moved the long-suffering and compassionate Lord God to delay the sentence, and He deferred the evil from the days of Ahab, unto his son's days.

My soul, in this dreadful history, learn to dread the power which the world with all its pomps and vanities, the flesh with its allurements and deceits, and the devil with all his snares and temptations may acquire over thee. Of these our great dangers Jezebel is the type, and thou seest what dreadful results arise from following such temptations, instead of resisting them. To be sold to work wickedness; dreadful, horrible thought! The prophet came to Ahab, but to thee, O my soul, God has spoken by His dear Son, our blessed Saviour, Who shed His precious Blood that thou shouldst not perish; beware, therefore, O my soul, lest, with greater privileges, higher promises than Ahab, thou fall into greater condemnation. If thou sell thyself to work wickedness, yea, even if thou give not thyself entirely to Him Who has purchased thee with His own most precious Blood, that Blood will cry out against thee; thou wilt crucify to thyself the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Grant, O God, that I may never come into this condemnation. O keep me, gracious Saviour, to Thyself, and let me so carry about with me the remembrance of all Thou hast done and suffered for me, that I may abhor the very garments spotted with the flesh, and keeping myself close to Thee, may avoid all manner of offence, and cheerfully accomplish those things that Thou wouldst have done.

Friday after Tenth Sunday.

But I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.—1 Kings, xxii. 8.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

The kings of Israel and Judah are consulting together concerning the war against the Syrians. Ahab, with all the restlessness of an unquiet conscience, gathered together all the prophets that could be met with; he knew that all was not right with him; he feared with a guilty fear the consequences of a false step, and he gathered encouragement from the four hundred men whom he had assembled together to advise him. But Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, of whom it is said, that he turned not away from doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord, was not satisfied with these prophets, but made an inquiry, "Whether there was not a prophet of the Lord besides, that we may inquire of him." Then Ahab admitted there was one, Micaiah, of whom inquiry might be made, but he added, "I hate him," not because he was wicked, but because he did not prophesy good concerning him.

I may here remark the extreme danger of the great, and indeed of all persons, in their degree, in listening to flatterers. In Ahab's case it was withholding the only food that could make his conscience easy, which made Micaiah odious to him.

The prophet boldly denounced judgment against

the wretch who had sold himself to work wickedness, and his reward was hatred.

Let me consider whether, in my humble sphere, I may not be in danger of falling into the beginning of the sin, in which we find Ahab so deeply immersed. Flattery is a dangerous thing, a despicable thing; and yet how many people like it; how many even practise it, without the least intention of doing so. Let me be very much on my guard in this respect; let me always distrust myself, if after associating with any one, I feel satisfied and pleased with myself; there has been in that intercourse flattery, perhaps unintentional, it may be utterly unknown on the part of my friend. But I must seek to know myself; examine my conscience thoroughly; and banish all self-satisfaction by the view of my many and grievous imperfections and failings.

But when a faithful minister or a true friend, who sees my faults and my weaknesses, and who does not seek to leave me well satisfied with myself, does not speak good concerning me, and does not conceal his disapprobation of my plans of action, do I, like Ahab, hate him? O my soul, answer not this question too hastily; thou rememberest thy uneasy feelings under rebuke; thou art not entirely free from the sin of Ahab; humble thyself before God on this account; and as this lurking desire for the good word of others may be one of thy "secret faults," from which thou prayest to be preserved, watch thyself in this respect, and pray to thy Heavenly Father to keep thee also from presumptuous sin.

Saturday after Tenth Sunday.

And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.

I Kings, xxii. 27.



HOLY Spirit of God, look with pity on my infirmity; help me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and abide with me now and ever, I humbly entreat Thee.

Micaiah stands before the king: he is adjured by Ahab to say nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord.

He prophesies, but not smooth things; he pictures the army of Israel without its leader, scattered to and fro, as sheep without a shepherd; therein furnishing an illustration which in after times our good Shepherd made use of. He shews that the Lord had put a lying spirit into the mouths of the prophets, to deceive the king, and he tells the king boldly of the Lord's anger.

Zedekiah smites him on the cheek; what associations does that blow raise up within me! The smiting of Micaiah's cheek, standing before his earthly king, brings before me the image of One, Whose sacred cheek was given to the smiters, while standing before His earthly judge; He was bruised for our iniquities; and we esteemed Him smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted.

Micaiah's dignified answer to Zedekiah filled the wicked king with rage. He could get no smooth prophecy from Micaiah; he ordered him away to prison, and commanded his keepers to treat him

with the utmost rigour until his return in peace. In peace, O Ahab ! Truly there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked ; and so he found when he commanded his charioteer to drive him out of the battle, being sorely wounded.

In all this Micaiah was blameless ; he suffered in the Lord's cause, and in the end he was justified. How differently would it have been, if, bowing before the authority of Ahab, he had lied unto him as all the other prophets had done ! but he, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, faithfully did the Lord's business ; and, no doubt, his light affliction worked for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

My soul, be thou strong and of good courage, and do as thy God would have thee do ; be not afraid if all men speak ill of thee ; if the rich or the powerful, or even thy dearest friend require of thee that which, for the Lord's sake, thou must withhold. Thou canst by no means go beyond what the Lord commands thee, therefore be content to suffer for awhile, and in due time thou wilt have thy reward ; perhaps not in this world, but certainly in the kingdom of Him Who hath said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake."

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."



Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.—1 Corinthians, xv. 2.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth ; strengthen my will with Thy grace ; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

By what follows this passage, the apostle evidently refers to his preaching Christ—the gospel which those who heard him had received, and wherein they stood.

To me the Gospel has been preached ; I stand in its doctrine and fellowship ; I believe all that has been revealed to me ; no shadow of doubt ever crosses my mind ; is it possible, then, that I can have believed in vain ?

Even so, I fear it may be, if I do not carry the effect of my knowledge into daily life, and practically apply all that my blessed Saviour has done and suffered for me, to the purifying and exalting of my soul to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

I know and believe that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, left the Throne of His Father, came down from heaven, took upon Him the form of a servant, clothed Himself with our weak and perishing flesh, and suffered all the pain and unrest of our nature. How can I, when I consider this, and think of the holiness and dignity conferred upon our nature by the Son of God deigning to become

a partaker of it, defile this body, weak and corrupt as it is, by making it the habitation of unholy thoughts, unbecoming words, gestures, and actions, unrestrained by the remembrance of the blessed Saviour, Whose perfect pattern of holy humanity I ought to endeavour to follow?

I know that Christ was obedient to His parents; if I have believed not in vain, let me live in humble subjection to my superiors, both spiritual and temporal. I know that Christ was tempted; if I believe not this in vain, let me resist the devil, and be strong and very courageous in fighting against the temptations which daily beset my path.

I know that Christ died for my sins. O that I may not believe this in vain. O that it may make me hate my sins, which were no less the occasion of His death than the traitor Judas, so that I quite forsake them, and utterly abolishing the whole body of sin, may walk simply and earnestly, desiring to be led by Him, my merciful Master, through the pains and perils of this life, no matter by how rough a path, so that I finally attain eternal rest in His glorious kingdom.

I know that Christ was buried. Bury my whole human nature with thee, O gracious Saviour, that I may rise without sin and spot, purified by Thee, and ready to mount above this world, living with Thee, blessed Lord, in Spirit, until the time when Thou wilt take me wholly unto Thyself.

Canst thou, O my soul, hope that thy belief is a fruitful, practical belief? Oh! not as it ought to be; thou canst not love thy Saviour in any degree as thou oughtest; thou canst not know all the love He has to thee, it is more than thou art able to express; all that thou canst do, is to watch thyself that thou keep thy body, once made in the image

of God, and renewed in Christ Jesus, holy and undefiled; bear constantly in remembrance that the flesh which thy Saviour has sanctified by taking upon Him must be accounted by thee as no unholy thing; and so keep away from thee all things that offend, or are likely to lead to offence.

Remember thy sins, put them far from thee, they crucified the Lord of Life; abhor them, cast them out, trample them under foot, and prostrate thyself before thy gracious Saviour, beseeching Him to vouchsafe unto thee His grace to follow Him in His blessed steps; to fill thy heart with firmer faith, deeper love, truer devotion to His service, and to grant that when thou shalt have finished thy course, thou mayest not have believed in vain.

O GOD, Who declarest Thy Almighty power most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity, mercifully grant unto us such a measure of Thy grace, that we, running the way of Thy commandments, may obtain Thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of Thy heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Monday after Eleventh Sunday.

But by the grace of God I am what I am.

I Corinthians, xv. 10.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth; strengthen my will with Thy grace; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

I am indeed encompassed with mercy on every side; the everlasting arms are thrown round me, and God has vouchsafed to be my guide. Through His mercy I was born in a happy country, a Christian not a heathen land, governed by mild laws. I have been endued with a healthy body, sound limbs, perfect senses, with gifts of nature and of fortune. I have been brought unto God, and had the gift of His grace bestowed upon me in Baptism, that gift nourished by kind parents and good teachers. I have had every opportunity of cultivating and growing in the grace given. I am now living within reach of the frequent partaking of the means of grace; but all this increase and growth of my better part is, notwithstanding the natural inclination which ever disposes me to evil, against the struggle which has been always carried on by nature. Well may I say with the apostle: By the grace of God I am what I am. I am, I truly and sorrowfully confess, a grievous sinner, yea, the chief of sinners; for though God's grace is abundantly shed upon me, yet to do evil is still present with me. I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind; and yet, by the grace of God, I find a refuge provided against the tyranny of sin, even in the arms of my Saviour, my Redeemer. I thank Thee, O heavenly Father, that by Thy grace I am what I am; redeemed by the precious Blood of Thy dear Son, O let me never fall away and forfeit this redemption, but let the continual consciousness of my exceeding sinfulness, and the constant watchfulness thence arising, beget in me such earnest endeavours after growth in this precious gift of grace, that the willingness of my mind may make me acceptable according to that which I have.

My soul, thou art desirous of going on, growing

in grace unto perfection; shake off all idle and needless fears; place the highest standard before thee, and aim at no less than perfection. Thou knowest how thy Saviour loves thee, endeavour to love Him more perfectly day by day, as the consciousness of thy sin makes His grace more precious to thee. O, gracious Saviour, should any of Thy servants love Thee better than I? should any be more obedient than I? No, Lord; for none of Thine are so much indebted to Thy Passion, because none had so many sins to be forgiven. How amiable are Thy commandments, O Lord of hosts; my soul thirsteth to be the nearest of them that shall stand before the presence of the living God. Lord, let me love Thee as Peter did. Lord, let me love Thee more than these.



Tuesday after Eleventh Sunday.

And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.—St. Luke, xviii. 9.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth; strengthen my will with Thy grace; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

To trust in myself that I am righteous is to have believed in vain. If I am righteous, why did Christ die for me? And yet the gospel says that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." Let me look in upon my soul, and then see how far I can trust to my own righteousness.

I am, God be thanked, free from any gross outward sins, but let me say so with humility, and not forget that a multitude of small sins and petty failings may sink my soul, as well as one great crime; besides which, if I allow one small sin to remain, I know not whether it may not speedily grow into a great one, even if the allowing one sin to remain uncorrected is not a great one in itself. Although, then, I am not guilty of any great and frightful sin, yet I am often dry in my devotion, soon weary of my prayers, dull and heavy in the ways to heaven, but quick and active in the ways of sin. I am a harsh judger of others, a mild condemner of myself; I let loose my tongue; I have too little control over my thoughts, and I follow my inclinations sooner than my duty in my actions. All these, and many more faults I know (), and endeavour to amend. I make them the subject of daily examination, and I pray, and watch, and strive, against them. Still day by day, I come before God, saying: Lord, as I add days unto days, so sins unto sins. After the greatest care and attention, some spots, some failures arise, which must be odious in the sight of Him, Who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; where then shall I go? If I say that I have no sin, I deceive myself; whither shall I fly? I must go to Jesus; He died for me. I must get me to my Lord; He rose again from the dead to raise me up to newness of life; and He ever liveth to make intercession for me at the right hand of the Father, Who, if I acknowledge my wickedness and am sorry for my sins, will look upon the face of Christ, will remember the blood of the cross, and will blot out my sins. Let me then, in meek humility listen to the precious words of our blessed Lord, and put away all self-righteousness; let me see my own sin

and my own weakness, and let me never despise others. Indeed how can I, when daily experience brings to light my own insufficiency, and many good qualities in others who, from external defects and deep humility, have not shown their high spiritual attainments before men; in their humility let me see my own imperfection, but let me love them, and all my brethren in Christ, as having fellowship in His sufferings, Who is our righteousness, our strength, and our salvation.

My soul, trust not to thy own righteousness, thou art very weak; lean upon Christ and thou shalt become strong; and when thou art strong in the Lord, be not high-minded, but recollect that thou art nothing without Christ, and get thee to thy Lord right humbly; beseech Him to keep thee ever with Him, and go on with a humble, lowly, contrite, and obedient heart, casting away all merits of thine own, and clothing thyself in the righteousness of Christ.



Wednesday after Eleventh Sunday.

Two men went up into the temple to pray.

St. Luke, xviii. 10.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth; strengthen my will with Thy grace; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

I see two men entering the temple together: their object is professedly the same, but they are very different in appearance; the one walks in with head

erect, courting the attention of the bystanders; he passes along with all the appearance of sanctity in his face, but that appearance is not carried out in his demeanour. The other man steals humbly along, keeping aloof from every one; and turning his eyes to the ground, seems occupied with his own thoughts, and heeds not the surrounding multitude. The two men pass to their places; the first stands conspicuously, with his hands spread out in the attitude of prayer; what says he? No words of petition, no request to God, but a self-gratulatory repetition of all the good deeds which he has done. But the other man stands afar off; he shuns observation; in the most secret part of the temple he stands, daring not to lift up his eyes to heaven; he sees his sin; he is sorry for it, he repents, he smites upon his breast and says, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

When I go up into the temple to pray, I go to the house of the Lord, the place where His honour dwelleth; I go to that dreadful place which is none other than the house of God, the gate of heaven; with the eye of faith I may see angels ascending and descending on the ladder which reaches up to the excellent glory in which the Most High God dwells.

I go up, a worm of the dust, laden with sins; and I enter into this glorious Presence; how do I bear myself? Oh! surely not as the Pharisee; for the light of the glories of the eternal kingdom quite extinguish the light of any good action of mine; I am a creature of the glorious King of kings. He formed me from nothing; He has laden me with mercy and loving-kindness, and yet I have sinned often and grievously against Him; often, by approaching Him with my lips, when my heart was far from Him; often, when in His house, kneeling with seeming

humility, bewailing in words my errings and strayings, my heart has not been there; I have looked with straying eyes, to see who of my acquaintance was there, forgetting the awful Presence which should keep me, body and soul, bent before Him; I have mingled worldly thoughts with my prayers and intercessions; I have spoken the thanksgivings with a cold heart; I have appeared to enter into the sacred services with devotion, and yet my heart has not gone along with their spirit; even when I have felt warmed by a greater spirit of devotion, how imperfect has my service been. How can I, then, remembering all this, indulge thoughts of pride and satisfaction? How can I ever "pray with myself,"—I, who have so much need to say, "Forgive us our debts." O, let me never so fight against grace as proudly to give thanks; let me never say, "God, I thank Thee;" let me never set myself up in comparison with my neighbour.

The publican who, in his humility, stands afar off, is brought near; he sought only reconciliation with God. He smote his breast, the abode of those thoughts the origin of his sin, and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The Lord is high, and yet hath He regard unto the lowly. My soul, know thyself, and become as this publican. Thou canst stand, and, at the remembrance of thy sins, smite thy breast and say, "Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner, yea, the chief of sinners."

I dare not so much as lift up mine eyes unto heaven, but I smite my breast. Out of the deep hath my soul cried unto Thee:

Lord, O Lord! be merciful unto me, of sinners the greatest. O, my Lord, where sin hath abounded, there let grace more exceedingly abound. O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God. *Amen.*

Thursday after Eleventh Sunday.

God be merciful to me a sinner.

St. Luke, xviii. 13.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth ; strengthen my will with Thy grace ; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

Let me consider the state of one from whose lips such words as these issue in sincerity ; and as our blessed Lord says that the publican went to his home justified rather than the other, let me think what that grace is, which had so blessed an effect.

The publican had not a good word to say for himself ; he threw himself, without plea, without excuse, before God ; he was humble, and he cast himself entirely upon the mercy of the Most High. It is the grace of humility which is so precious before God, that grace which makes us to take the lowest room ; which makes us sincerely prefer all others before ourselves, and convinces us that we are worthy of no esteem, or honour, or praise, or glory ; that grace which extinguishes, by the sight of our sins and infirmities, the inclination to take credit for any good which is in us ; that grace which shows us that but for God's free unmerited mercy, we should have been long since crushed to atoms, and left to consume away in hell. Why is this grace of humility so acceptable before God ? It is because God is truth, and nothing but truth can stand before Him ; pride is made up of deceits and errors ; and what is ascribing any good whatsoever to ourselves, but a

great and absolute untruth? No; we stand before God as we are, clothed in filthy garments. Satan, our accuser, stands beside us; he recounts all our evil deeds, our wicked thoughts, every idle word. How can we then, but smite on our breast and say: God be merciful to me a sinner.

My soul, remember that there is no room in heaven for pride, and beseech thy heavenly Father to make thee a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within thee; for He hath promised to dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, and to revive the spirit of the humble.

The more thou stoopest down, O my soul, the more thou castest thyself under the feet of every one by humility, the more God will exalt thee; He will exalt thee here by the rich gifts of His grace; hereafter, in the glory which He has prepared for His chosen.

O Lord God, give me, I beseech Thee, the grace of true humility, that I may always esteem others more highly than myself; that I become more teachable, more convinced of my sins, more childlike and simple, more easily led, and more entirely dependent upon Thee; let me ever strike upon my breast with true contrition, and exclaim, with heart and mouth, God be merciful unto me a sinner.



Friday after Eleventh Sunday.

God be merciful to me a sinner.

St. Luke, xviii. 13.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth ; strengthen my will with thy grace ; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

Humility being so excellent a grace, and so necessary of attainment, let me consider how I am to proceed in order to gain some portion of this great gift.

To know God and to know myself is the true science to be attained, if I seek to grow to the stature of a man in Christ Jesus. The more I know God, and understand all His perfections, the more I meditate upon the immensity of His power, the inexhaustible measures of His love, His abundant mercy, His glory, His power, and all His wondrous works, the more I perceive how poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked I am ; when I look upon myself, even in the most favourable light, and then turn my eyes to the throne of glory, where God, the all-pure, the all-holy, dwells from everlasting to everlasting, surrounded by cherubim and seraphim—all pure and holy creatures, whose delight and sole employ is to do the will of their heavenly Master,—I am utterly confounded and brought to shame, to see my own misery, and I can only wonder at, and adore the infinite mercy and compassion that spares me from the just punishment of my offences. Day by day let me meditate upon the infinite perfections

of God, the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity : the subject is so boundless, so immense, that life is not long enough to understand such glories and perfections ; yet, still I must seek to attain a more perfect knowledge, that I may grow in love, and become more distrustful of myself.

I must also remember what I am ; what I was from the beginning of my life, and what I should be without the mercy of God. I was born into this world a weak and wailing infant ; I was dependent for everything on the kindness and charity of others ; as I grew, my body was subject to diseases and infirmities, my mind was clouded and shaded with imperfections, my passions were strong, my reason uncontrolled. Many, O how many, have been my sins and infirmities from my childhood until now ! how has good and evil been mixed up in my life ; how can I trace all the evil to myself, all the good to God ! I shall go forward yet a few years, and then the dreaded hour will come when I shall feel that my life is come to an end ; my soul will go to God Who gave it, my body to the dust.

Enter this last school of humility, O my soul, and see the ghastly remains of mortality, which lie all still and cold in yonder grave ; all that remains of what was once full of life and vigour, moving about in the pride of health, in the excitement of busy speculations, (perhaps full of pride at having achieved some great thing,) is a little corrupting flesh, and some bones which gape, and stare, and point, as in mockery of poor humanity.

This is what my body will come to ; thou, O my soul, wilt be with God ; to Him thou owest any victory thou mayest have gained over thy human nature ; to Him thou owest all thy true happiness ; His strength has conquered thy weakness, and by

His grace thou art what thou art, not in thy nature, but in the grace which He has bestowed upon thee.

Stir up within thee the fervent desire to cultivate humility, and when thoughts of pride and feelings of self-satisfaction come over thee, lift the coffin lid, gaze upon what thou wilt one day become, and remember that all go into one place, all are of dust, and all turn to dust again; then smite thy breast and say, God be merciful to me a sinner!



Saturday after Eleventh Sunday.

God be merciful to me a sinner.

St. Luke, xviii. 13.

BE with me, O God, I humbly beseech Thee, in this my meditation; feed my understanding with the knowledge of Thy truth; strengthen my will with Thy grace; and feast my whole soul with everlasting hopes.

God has been very merciful unto thee already, O my soul! He sent down His eternal Son from heaven, both to give thee a pattern of humility and of all other graces and virtues; and, by dying on the cross, to blot out the handwriting of transgressions which is against thee.

Consider this excellent pattern of humility; remember that our blessed Saviour came down among men, as "a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." Remember that He, being God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. Let this mind,

therefore, be in thee which was also in Christ Jesus ; remember that He it is Who gives thee the gracious invitation to come unto Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart ; follow Him whithersoever He may lead thee, and rest in constant contemplation of all the passages of His holy life, and of His cruel and bitter death. Bear constantly in mind that He chose to be born in a stable ; to be circumcised as a sinner ; to flee into Egypt as if He were unable to resist a petty mortal ; to be brought up in poverty and labour ; to work at a laborious trade ; to be obedient to His creatures ; to be baptized among sinners ; to suffer Himself to be tempted by the devil ; to make choice of the poorer and meaner sort of men for His companions and disciples ; to make Himself as their servant, even to the washing of their feet ; to fly from honours and applause ; to conceal His glory ; to enjoin secrecy with regard to His wonderful works ; and to embrace on all occasions, both in life and death, whatever was most humbling and most despicable in the eyes of men. O Lord Jesus, teach me to follow Thy blessed example. O teach me to be meek and humble of heart like Thee, that so I may be Thy disciple indeed.

But consider, O my soul, thy frailty ; thy aptness to fall into error, even in thy holy things. Beware of that pride which makes a parade of being humble, and avoid all occasions of shewing thyself before men ; feel thyself as nothing, and then wilt thou act as if self were quite put aside ; speak not of thy sins ; do not distinguish thyself by any unusual plainness of dress or of manner, but seek to behave in that way which will attract the least notice from others ; the test of thy sincerity will be the feelings with which thou bravest, not the taunts or the scorn of others, but the neglect—the entirely being passed

over, by persons of whom thou thinkest with respect.

O blessed Lord, send down Thy Holy Spirit to assist me in ascending, step by step, to the perfect knowledge of myself, until I arrive at the perfection of humility; and grant that I may always set Thee before my eyes, that by continual study of Thy life and doctrine, Thy maxims and examples, I may learn of Thee to be truly humble; then, and then only, shall I exclaim in sincerity and truth, God be merciful to me a sinner.



Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

*And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:
not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any-
thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.*
2 Corinthians, iii. 4, 5.



ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

The season between Trinity Sunday and Advent is set apart by the Church for the contemplation and cultivation of the ordinary duties and virtues necessary for a Christian character. This brings necessarily with it a self-contemplation, which may be

dangerous unless counteracted and led into the right channel. This self-contemplation may lead to reliance on our own works and exertions. On this, the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, the Church reminds me by putting this portion of the epistle to the Corinthians before me, that through the merits of Christ alone, we are made acceptable to God.

Let me consider that I was conceived and born in sin ; and though, by the grace of God, conferred in baptism, I have been made pure, that is, I have been placed in a position to have the merits of Christ imputed to me, yet the original taint still remains—sin dims the lustre of the Christian armour which has been girt upon me, and I fall back if I make any efforts to fight against my spiritual enemies. When I come to the end of the day I remember the many errors and backslidings, the rules passed over, the precepts forgotten ; and as this occurs day by day, with very little appearance of amendment, I exclaim, Who is sufficient for these things ? Yet I see and read examples of the patient struggles after holiness of the saints and servants of the Lord ; I see their difficulties, their dangers ; I also see their humility, their prayers ; their entire simplicity and trust in God ; their complete setting aside of themselves, and hanging upon God. How can I but follow such blessed examples, and endeavour after this humble reliance on the divine mercy and assistance ? For this purpose, I can have no will of my own, but I must pray earnestly and continually that God will work in me both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Remember, O my soul, that thy trust is through Christ to God-ward ; through the mediation of the dearly beloved Son alone canst thou hope to be heard ; and by His intercession thou wilt gain strength and help in time of need ;

that time of need is every day, every hour, every minute. Thou canst do nothing of thyself; beseech thy gracious God, for the sake of His dear Son, to make thee sufficient for these things.

O Lord, grant that I may never put my trust in anything that I do, but grant me Thy strength, that in all the passages of this life, in all the dangers and difficulties of the world, my weakness may be strengthened by Thy gracious help, and let me, when all is done, say, Have mercy upon my soul, for I am an unprofitable servant.



Monday after Twelfth Sunday.

The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

2 Cor. iii. 6.



ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord *Amen.*

When God placed our first parents in the garden of Eden, they had all things absolutely at their disposal; they were masters of every thing—the beasts of the field, and the fruits of the garden: one thing only was forbidden them,—to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; that command was the law; they transgressed the law, they sinned; sin entered

into the world, and death by sin. I see by this, that before the law there was no sin ; by the law is the knowledge of sin. Now sin, I am told, is the transgression of the law ; any disobedience, even of the slightest commandment, is sin, and the soul that sinneth, it shall die ; how true is it then that the letter killeth.

But when Adam had transgressed the law and fallen, God gave a mysterious promise of release from the body of that fearful death, which their sin brought upon them. The enmity put between the seed of the woman and the serpent ; the bruising of the serpent's head and the Man's heel, threw a dark shadow of coming relief.

During the period which elapsed between man's fall and his redemption from the bondage which that fall occasioned, the Scriptures of the Old Testament bear record to the sin, the sorrow, the misery, which dwelt among men ; as the time approached, clearer intimations were given of the deliverance which was to be effected ; the prophets spake out boldly ; the Psalms rang out the glad tidings in high and solemn words ; many were waiting and looking for the salvation of Israel, when, lo ! He appeared, this great Saviour, not as a conqueror, nor as a king, but as a meek and lowly man ! in the power of that One Who was in the form of a servant, having no beauty that we should desire Him, despised and rejected of men,—the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. This is Jesus, the Saviour, Who is come to save His people from their sins !

The law truly killeth, but the Spirit giveth life ; and this meek and lowly Man Who took upon Him our infirmities, and was in all points tempted as we

are, only without sin, declares, "that the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him, because He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor; to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised." This is the Spirit which giveth life, and this blessed Spirit is the gift bestowed upon His Church, by our most blessed Lord and Saviour. His words which He speaketh unto us, they are spirit and they are life.

O my soul, earnestly pray for such a measure of this blessed Spirit as shall enable thee to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil; beseech Him to pour down upon thee the abundance of His mercy; forgiving thee those things of which thy conscience is afraid, and giving thee those good things which thou art not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord.



Tuesday after Twelfth Sunday.

But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

2 Corinthians, iii. 7, 8.



ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy; forgiving us those things where-

of our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

There were thunderings and lightnings on the mount of God, when Moses, very early in the morning, proceeded to the summit of that majestic and rugged mountain, carrying in his hand the two tables of stone, as the Lord had commanded him.

Moses arrives at the place appointed, and prostrating himself, awaits the approach of the great and terrible Lord God. The Lord descended in a cloud; a mighty tempest was stirred round about Him; He came flying on the wings of the wind; the voice of the Lord, which is a glorious voice, proceeded out of the cloud, and He proclaimed Himself, "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth." Moses hears the awful but joyful words; but *how* long-suffering, *how* gracious that great and glorious Lord was, he knew not then, but he did know, when on another mount he beheld the glory of the high and holy One, Who came to carry out His Father's merciful scheme of redemption on earth.

And the Lord passed by Moses, and Moses fell down and worshipped, and bowed his head to the earth. The law was given; the ministration of death was engraven on two tables of stone; and Moses descended from the mount, knowing not that he had contracted a portion of the glory which had been revealed to him. His face shone, so that the children of Israel could not look upon him steadfastly.

O how glorious it is to have communion with the high and holy One Which inhabiteth eternity ! How glorious to lie prostrate and feel that the Lord is nigh ; that the glorious and mysterious Being Whom no man has seen at any time, is there ! God the holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, vouchsafes to shew us at different times and in divers manners, portions and irradiations of glory from the Divine Presence.

God the Father gave unto Moses this ministration of death, in such splendour and unspeakable glory, that a portion of the ineffable brightness was imparted to the poor mortal who witnessed it. God the Son shewed His glory on Mount Tabor, the mount of transfiguration, when a cloud overshadowed Him, and Moses and Elias talked with them, and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was as bright as the light ; in what the glory consisted we are not permitted to know. Peter and John witnessed some of it and were exceedingly afraid, and we are permitted to allow our imagination to rest upon the fact, that this extraordinary splendour was the glory which belongs now to our blessed Lord, when sitting in the heavens at the right hand of His Father. The lowly form which He had assumed for His mission of peace, was for the time thrown aside, and He stood Light of light, very God of very God, equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood ; and He, this holy and glorious Being, was come to do away with the ministration of death, and introduce the ministration of the Spirit.

But stop awhile and consider these things, O my soul ; think upon the great and glorious God, and with Moses fall down and worship Him ; if He had

brought the ministration of death unto thee, thou couldst not hope for more, for God is infinite justice, and requires satisfaction for the sins and offences of thy youth, the manifold errors of thy riper years, for thy original corruption, and for thy grieving of His Holy Spirit,—the ministration of death is alone thy desert. But blessed be His Holy Name ! He has reserved for thee higher and holier privileges ; He spared not His only Son to save thee from that condemnation, and thou art brought under the ministrations of His blessed spirit of grace !



Wednesday after Twelfth Sunday.

How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious ?—2 Corinthians, iii. 8.



ALmighty and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve ; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy ; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

The ministration of death was revealed in thunderings and lightnings ; in awful pomp and splendour. The ministration of the Spirit was begun obscurely, quietly, and without noise or pomp. For in a lowly stable, born of a poor maid, in miserable poverty, there came into the world an Infant : true, that the heavenly hosts sang glory to God on the event ; they

were heard only by shepherds ; true, that guided by a star, wise kings came to seek for the King Who was to minister in another covenant ; their search only caused bloodshed and horror ; and though they satisfied themselves by offering their gift, they did not make the whole world to start up and see the Wonder, the Immanuel, Who was going to effect such changes.

This Infant grew ; He was nursed in poverty, brought up in obscurity ; He worked at a laborious trade, and when He went forth to do His Father's will, He was of no reputation ; some mean men were His followers. They saw, indeed, glorious things ; they heard words which made their ears to tingle ; they heard of a different law from the one which required "an eye for an eye ;" they were not to resist evil ; they saw leprosy touched without uncleanness, death encountered without pollution ; they saw evil spirits quelled, and storms calmed ; they saw the mountains and hills brought low, the valleys raised, and the rough places made smooth ; all was calmed, quelled, and subdued. The thunders were gone ; the tempests ceased ; the desert and the solitary place blossomed as a rose, and an highway was there ; a way, it was called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those : the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

This lowly Man passed on His way, was taken before the Roman governor, the victim of a treacherous conspiracy ; He was condemned, and He died. The few wicked men who consented unto His death, saw that He had passed away ; their malice was satisfied. Poor, short-sighted, human malice ! Their Victim had spoken three words, which shewed that His will, not theirs, had been fulfilled.

He cried out "It is finished;" and as the ministration of death was begun in darkness and convulsions of nature, so was it ended. There was darkness over all the land, the earth did quake, the rocks rent, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain. The sacrifice was offered; the ministration of condemnation was done away; atonement had been made once for all; the ministration of the Spirit was fully established. But He on Whom the Spirit of the Lord rested was gone; He left a promise on which His disciples rested their faith, and reposed their hope. In due time, the blessed Spirit, Third Person of the glorious Trinity, came down from heaven in glory and splendour, with a mighty rushing wind and cloven tongues of fire. He rested upon His disciples, and they went forth to fulfil the commission given by their blessed and glorified Master. Hitherto the ministration of the new covenant had worked quietly and slowly; to the land of Judea and Galilee was confined its operation, but in the course of a few years their sound had gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world; the ministration of the Spirit became glorious. The glad tidings of salvation were proclaimed to the end of the earth, and all the world rang with the angelic hymn: Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will towards men.

O my soul, bless the Lord God of Israel, Who hath raised up a mighty salvation, and look forward to the time when the ministration of the Spirit being accomplished, the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with song and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Thursday after Twelfth Sunday.

And they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech ; and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him.—St. Mark, vii. 32.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve ; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy ; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

Behold our gracious Lord, travel-worn and fatigued, standing by the sea of Galilee : He is just come from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, but He has no rest ; for a company are approaching Him. They lead with them one who does not fully understand for what purpose he is brought to that place. They stand before Jesus ; they represent to Him the grievous state of the deaf man ; from his childhood he had heard neither threat nor promise ; the sweet words of love had never penetrated his ears, neither had the wholesome sounds of correction ever entered therein ; his lips had consequently never been instructed to utter any certain sounds, and as his friends had no means of making him hear their voices, neither had he any power to make himself understood by them. They therefore beseech the Lord to put His hand upon him ; they had heard of the efficacy of that divine touch, but their faith did not penetrate into the Omnipotence by which He

might have commanded, and it would have been done.

Approach, my soul, and see in the history of this deaf and dumb man thine own. Since thy childhood the Spirit of God has approached thee in many ways; day by day His voice has been speaking to thee; by the reproaches of conscience when led into any sin; by the voice of God in times of sorrow; by the overwhelming news of the death of friends, perhaps when least expected; by joyful tidings unlooked for; by manifestations of God's providence, which have made thee feel astonished at thine own happiness; by all thou hast heard; by all thou hast learned. Thus hast thou been instructed, but hast thou listened? Hast thou heard all this? has thine ear been open to the least whisper, as well as to the full and pealing anthem? Alas! thou art much in the case of the deaf man now before thee. Thine ear has been closed to sounds that might have startled the dead; thy mouth has uttered no praise; thou must stand before thy Saviour an object for His tender compassion; thou hast thought but little of His power; thou hast been deaf to the hosannas of the multitude who followed Him. But see, He is before thee, He waits to be gracious to thee; art thou conscious of thy past deafness? He will open thine ears; and dost thou feel that thou hast been dumb when the wicked was before thee? He will unloose thy tongue, and thou shalt speak aloud of His praise, for it is written, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing."

Friday after Twelfth Sunday.

And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears, and He spit, and touched his tongue: And looking up to heaven, He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

St. Mark, vii. 33, 34.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

Behold our Gracious Lord approaching the deaf man; the gentle and loving, yet commanding look with which He meets the wild glance of inquiry of the deaf man, subdues all fears, and he suffers himself to be led apart from the curious multitude; he stands before his Saviour. I now see that high and holy One put His blessed finger into the soundless ear; He approaches and touches with spittle the tongue, and He looks up to heaven, the abode of His Father, the place from whence He descended to give gifts unto men, and He sighs,—“His was a Saviour’s woe,”—for the weight of our sins and infirmities was even then pressing upon His soul, and He said, “Ephphatha, be opened;” immediately “the ears of the deaf were unstopped, and the tongue of the dumb sang.”

O how gracious, how merciful is our loving Sa-

viour ! He became Man ; He took upon Him our humanity—that nature, which in us is defaced and degraded by Adam's sin, but which in Him was again raised to the perfection from which we had fallen ; He touched with His finger to shew that His Body, united to Deity, was connected by divine virtue with all that He did ; and He therefore touched with His finger, and opened the ears, and gave the power of speech with His spittle.

How affecting is that look upward to heaven ; how penetrating is that sigh ! The sigh was turned to groans in Gethsemane, to strong crying and tears on Calvary ; and why, but for the weight of our many sins, thy many sins, O my soul ! Canst thou hear thy Saviour's sigh, and not be touched with compunction for those sins which burdened His innocent soul ? Canst thou receive thy Saviour's cure, canst thou get the answer to thy prayers in the removal of thy infirmities without seeing that heaven-directed look, guiding thine own eyes to the holy hill from whence cometh thy help ?

O no, blessed Lord ! behold me ; I endeavour to step aside from the multitude, by putting away all worldly desires and thoughts ; I beseech Thee to open mine ears to hear the wondrous things of Thy law ; I entreat Thee to loose my tongue, that I may speak Thy praises, and utter endless thanksgivings for the mercy with which Thou camest down from heaven, whither Thou hast directed my eyes ; and with which Thou barest the weight of my want of spiritual senses, which heavy burthen caused Thee more than once to sigh and groan.

Resolve, O my soul, when thou art weary, and dry, and heavy in prayer and adoration, to say, " Lord, take me from the multitude ; say unto me, Ephphatha ; increase my faith, and as I believe, so let it be done unto me."

Saturday after Twelfth Sunday.

And Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.—2 Kings, xix. 14.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

I, who have been deaf and would not hear when the Lord called me, and who have had an impediment in my speech, so that I could not speak, have been brought unto Jesus; He has said the word, Ephphatha, and my eyes have been opened, and I can speak plain. What use, then, can I make of the privileges granted unto me? As privileges they imply responsibilities, and woe is me if I use them not aright. Although I am chosen of God, separated from the world, and made one of His elect people, yet still I walk in the world; I am still on my probation; trials and difficulties await me, cares and sorrows surround me; and although I am endued with great gifts, and have had such great things done for me, yet still I find how difficult it is to walk on wisely, neither turning to the right nor the left, and to keep me from the temptations which daily assail me.

This example of Hezekiah shews me how I ought to act; that as the Lord has opened my ears

to hear His commands, and has given me powers of speech to utter my aspirations, I am to use His gift in bringing all the feelings and desires of my heart, and to spread them before the Lord. Here is comfort in sorrow ; for if any evil accident befall a loved one, and the heart oppressed with grief would burst if not relieved of its load, I may go up and spread out my sorrow before the Lord, and He will hear me, and relieve me from my distress. Again, if any perplexity come upon me, and I am uncertain how to act ; I go up to the temple and spread this care before the Lord, and doubt not but, in His own way and at His own time, the Lord will hear me.

I have committed an error ; I spread it before the Lord, I confess my wickedness, and am sorry for my sin, and He declares that a broken and contrite heart He will not despise.

My soul, how encompassed art thou with mercies and privileges ! Thy Lord sighed over the deaf man, He sighs over thy infirmities ; He is thy friend, pour out thy whole soul to Him, leave not a thought, a feeling undisclosed, and if thou art weary and heavy laden with the burthen, He will refresh thee. Then day by day, as thou goest into the temple, or as thou enterest thy closet to spread thy whole self before the Lord, thou wilt feel the place full of that unspeakable glory which the presence of God creates ; thou wilt then feel less alone than when in the midst of company ; thou wilt pour out thy every feeling unto thy dearest Saviour, thy compassionate Master, and thou wilt bless His holy Name for having so graciously approached thee, and for having vouchsafed to allow thee to approach Him, Whose service is perfect freedom, true peace, and never-failing happiness.

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Galatians, iii. 16.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God ! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my meditation, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

Let me consider the promises made to Abraham by God : First, God commanded him to leave his country and kindred, and go into a land which He would shew him, connecting with this command a promise of future greatness and prosperity. Abraham went out, knowing not whither he was to be led, and God took him into the land of Canaan ; and God said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land."

All this time Abraham had no child ; and when God talked with him, and made a covenant with him, and talked of the greatness of his seed, Abraham believed that the Almighty God would in some manner accomplish His promise. He probably did not deem that it would be fulfilled by children of his own. At length Abraham was an hundred years old, and Sarah, when ninety, gave birth to Isaac ; on this child all the hopes of his parents were centred. Abraham remembered God's pro-

mises, and he saw in Isaac an earnest of their accomplishment.

Little did Abraham think, when in simple confiding faith he led his darling son up the steep side of Mount Moriah, to obey God's commands in offering him as a sacrifice, that he was shewing forth the accomplishment of the promises made to him by God, in a more striking manner than any type before or afterwards conveyed. The faith of Abraham met with its reward ; while yet the ram, which had taken the place of Isaac, smoked upon the altar, God confirmed His former promise with an oath ; He spoke of Abraham's seed being the channel of conveying blessings unto all the nations upon earth ; that seed was Christ ; and as the lamb was offered up to God instead of Isaac on Mount Moriah, so was the Lamb of God offered upon the altar of the Cross, instead of the whole human race, who, dead in trespasses and sins, were thus raised up to newness of life, to walk before the face of their appeased Lord.

My soul, bless the Lord, Who has vouchsafed to shew thee some of the mysteries of His kingdom. Thou art too ignorant, too weak, to understand and fully enter into the vast complication of the design ; but what thou canst see, must fill thee with adoring love. That God should have commenced such a scheme of mercy and goodness, and carried it forward, making all things and all men instruments and types in His hands for working it out, is wonderful, it is astonishing ! O my soul, consider thyself as an instrument in God's hands for carrying out His wise purposes, and emulate the perfect faith of Abraham ; let that faith lead thee simply to follow God's gracious leadings ; think not on the result, think only that it is His

Monday after Thirteenth Sunday. 251

will, and be sure that a blessing will attend thee ; if He lead thee to suffering, thou wilt then be patient ; if He lead thee to persecution, thou wilt be firm and very courageous ; if He lead thee to honour and distinction, thou wilt be humble ; and thou wilt learn whatsoever thou doest, to do all to the glory of Him, thy dear Lord and Master.



Monday after Thirteenth Sunday.

But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.—Galatians, iii. 22.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God ! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my meditation, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

Holy Scripture gives an account of God's dealings with men ; from the beginning, when Eve ate the forbidden fruit, and caused Adam to transgress likewise, the whole history is a record of sins, individual and national ; sometimes repented of, sometimes disregarded ; sometimes punished, sometimes left without punishment. The very highest characters among the saints and worthies in the Old Testament occasionally committed sins, for which we cannot account in persons of such high and holy character. Abraham's conduct to Abi-

melech ; Jacob's lie to his father ; the dishonesty of his sons in the matter of Joseph ; the entire want of religion and conduct throughout all Israel in the time of the Judges ; the history of the kings ; Saul's reprobacy ; David's adulterous marriage ; Solomon's idolatrous old age ; even the good king Hezekiah falling away, when in his pride of heart he shewed his treasures to the Assyrians ; all shew us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But a promise was made, a covenant was sealed with Abraham for all that walk in his steps, not only by circumcision, but by faith also ; the promise was made not only to those under the law, but to those who through faith have righteousness imputed to them.

But what righteousness can be imputed to us, dead as we are in trespasses and sins ; we, who have sinned and come short of the glory of God,—we, who have a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin ? O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? My soul, thank God with St. Paul, that through the blessed and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thou art made free from the law of sin and death. That promise which in Abraham was sealed in the blood of circumcision, was fulfilled in the blood poured out upon the cross ; that blood has cleansed thee, O my soul, from the deadly impurity of sin, that blood has appeased the wrath, and the outraged justice of the Lord of heaven and earth. He regards His only begotten ; He listens to the continual intercession, and He turns His face from thy sins, and blots out thy misdeeds ; if only thou hang entirely, and depend wholly, upon that one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction made for the sins of all the world.

Tuesday after Thirteenth Sunday. 253

Resolve, then, O my soul, to cultivate such entire and perfect faith in the merits of thy crucified Saviour, that thou mayest be enabled to stand the shock of all temptations, and that nothing either in life or death may separate thee from the love of Him, thy blessed Redeemer.



Tuesday after Thirteenth Sunday.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.—St. Luke, x. 27.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God ! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my meditation, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

The lawyer asks our blessed Lord a question, hoping to entrap Him to say something against Moses and the law ; but He makes the lawyer answer his own question, shewing him that although he was acquainted with the letter, he was ignorant of the spirit of that law which he professed to teach.

During this week, the Church brings to our notice, that the law was not a distinct and separate dispensation which had nothing to do with the gospel, but was added, because of transgression, and that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, to fill up the space between the giving of the promises to the

chosen seed, until the fulness of time when that seed should bruise the serpent's head.

The same commandments hold good under the gospel as under the law ; the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice has been offered ; and the precious Blood which has been shed has blotted out the hand-writing of transgression which is against us.

The commandment here quoted by the lawyer, is one delivered by the Lord God to Moses, and is as binding unto me, as it was to the children of Israel ; nay, even more so, for I live in a time when God's mercy is more fully developed ; and as He so loved us as to give His only-begotten Son to die for us, how much the more reason have I to love Him, who know and believe in this astonishing work of mercy.

The commandment being to love God with every power and faculty with which He has endued me, it behoves me to consider how I can perform the command, and to call to remembrance in what respects I have hitherto failed in it, that I may amend my future course.

To love God with all the heart, is to bend every action of the body, every look, every gesture, to the one object ; I am God's ; let me behave as an obedient child ought to do ; let every action shew the love I have to that great God, Who has loaded me with favours from the moment of my birth until now ; let all my earthly affections be entirely subdued and brought beneath the love which God demands, which must exist above the love of parent, friend, or child.

To love God with all the soul, let every feeling be subdued, and brought under obedience to the one great feeling of love ; let every word be ruled by it, every thought controlled by it. Let every talent, every thing in which I excel, be brought forth to promote the glory of God.

To love Him with all my mind, let me seek earnestly the grace of His blessed Spirit to sanctify my prayers, my acts of adoration, and of love; and to bring all to bear upon the one great object of my existence,—the desire of union with God. And all this bowing down of the heart, mind, and soul, before the One, adorable, mighty, and merciful God, must be performed with all the strength; the full force of each temper, disposition, talent, faculty, of each feeling and sensation, must be applied to the love of God; and then see how the life will be corrected, the mind purified, and every feeling raised to the High and Holy One!

But, my soul, how low thou livest in comparison with the high standard here set before thee! Thou art, it is to be feared, like the lawyer, who knew the letter of the commandment, but understood not its spirit. Thy love is lukewarm; thou apprehendest not the glory, the brightness, the majesty, the purity of Him Whom thou professest to love, or thou wouldst endeavour to approach Him more earnestly, more reverently; thou wouldst maintain a more constant sense of His presence; thou wouldst let go thy hold upon the world, and wouldst seek more perfect union with Him Who is thy every good, and Who says: "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments."



Wednesday after Thirteenth Sunday.

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?—St. Luke, x. 29.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God ! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my meditation, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

It is impossible to love God, unless I at the same time love my neighbour. This love must not only sit on my tongue, but live in my heart ; not with an ordinary, indifferent tenderness, but equal to the kindness I have for myself.

Hence I must neither do him harm nor wish him any ; I must excuse his failings, and bear with his weaknesses ; I must neither touch his reputation nor goods ; I must assist him in his necessities, protect him in danger, and comfort him in affliction ; I must do by him as I would be done by, were he in the same circumstances.

With the lawyer I now inquire, Who is my neighbour ? I hope I ask not the question in order to narrow my sphere of obligation ; I hope I seek not to justify myself if I have hitherto taken the word in too limited a sense, but I truly desire to know and to do my duty towards men. " My neighbour " is every one brought near to me by blood, by the precious blood of Christ, which has alike redeemed us from sin and death. The slave, the servant, the

prince, the monarch, all are my neighbours; and all, as circumstances bring them near to me, I am to love as myself, and serve as I would serve and help my own soul.

My soul, art thou ready to declare that thou hast obeyed this obligation? Does thy love to thy brethren bear the test of comparison with the love that thou hast for thyself? Dost thou wish him no harm; dost thou excuse his failings? dost thou take no advantage of his misfortunes or mistakes to rise by his fall?

O how has thy practice, my soul, been contrary to the precept of thy blessed Saviour. In every point thou offendest, if not in malice and by design, yet still by carelessness and want of recollection. Thou must search out occasions to do good by every means in thy power; and must see in every one who is brought near to thee, by whatever circumstance, the neighbour thou art to love, and succour, and cherish, as thyself.

Enlarge my heart and my affections, O Lord my God, that I may be enabled to comprehend some of the vastness of Thy love, and to return it to Thee, with such strength as Thou deignest to bestow upon me, and at the same time grant that the love Thou hast poured upon me in such a broad stream from the rivers of Thy mercy, may descend from me to my brethren in such a manner as may refresh the weary and heavy laden, and may shew that I am indeed Thine in spirit and in truth.



Thursday after Thirteenth Sunday.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves.—St. Luke, x. 30.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my meditation, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

Our blessed Lord, in order to instruct us in the universal love and charity we ought to exercise towards those who are placed near to us, relates the parable of the good Samaritan, a person differing from the Jews, God's chosen people, both in religion and nation, but whose charity is held up as a pattern for all to follow.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho; he fell among thieves, who stripped him and beat him, and left him half dead. While lying in this sad condition a priest came that way, and when he saw the wounded man, he avoided him, passing by on the other side. A Levite also came by, he looked on him, and to look must have been to feel compassion; but he did nothing for him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, on a journey, and therefore probably with no time to spare, came and saw him, and had compassion on him. He went and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; when he was somewhat refreshed, the good Samaritan set him on his own beast, and

brought him to an inn and took care of him ; and on the morrow, before he proceeded on his journey, he called the host, and gave him money to provide for the comfort of the wounded traveller, saying, that more would be given, if, on his return, that were not found to be enough.

Let me here consider the several points of this parable which seem to call for particular attention. The poor man had been stripped of his clothing, and not only stripped, but beaten nearly to death ; in this state the thieves left him, and the priest found him. Great was the guilt of the thieves, but we are not told who or what they were, they might have been heathens who knew not God ; we are told who the person was who found him, he was a priest, one who must have known the law ; but he acted not on his knowledge, and to such as he our Lord says, " Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." The priest passed by on the other side. Likewise the Levite, who, according to the law, was a brother, looked on him, saw his pitiable condition ; still he passed by, he saw his brother have need, he shut up his bowels of compassion ; how could the love of God dwell with him ? But the Samaritan, though he might not have known the law, though he was not one of the same country, or the same religion, though he had excuses, which the priest and the Levite had not, still he stopped ; he had compassion ; he ministered to his sufferings and wants ; he provided for his future necessities. How can we doubt but that the love of God reigned in the heart of this good man ; although he was not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary, the spirit was there, and by becoming neighbour to him who fell among thieves, he came within the range of that promise,

“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” My soul, consider this parable; thou art oftener placed in the situation of this Samaritan, than thou thinkest; thou art surrounded by the suffering, the sorrowful, the hungry, the naked. Dost thou do everything in thy power for their relief, by alms, by sympathy, by attention, by kindness and consideration? Verily I fear that thou sometimes turnest to the other side; thou doest a slight alms, and then thou shrinkest from reflecting upon the misery of others; thou triest to put it aside, because the thought is uneasy. Oh, what is this but turning to the other side?

Resolve from henceforth to seek out thy “neighbour,” and endeavour to pour the oil of consolation and the wine of gladness into the wounds of thy fellow creatures; thou wilt then become more watchful and more tender of thy neighbour, thou wilt love the Lord thy God with greater fervour, and thou wilt appropriate to thyself thy Saviour’s choicest blessings.



Friday after Thirteenth Sunday.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.
St. Luke, x. 30.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my me-

dition, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

There is a deeper meaning in this parable of the good Samaritan, on which I desire to meditate. The certain man represents the human race. He journeys from Jerusalem, which is, by interpretation, the city of peace,—that heavenly country which was forfeited by sin,—to Jericho, which signifies our mortality; he is set upon by robbers, or evil spirits, and the devil, who strip him of his immortality, of his innocence, and his virtue, and wound him with many sins; his understanding was darkened; his notions of good and evil and his will perverted; his passions let loose, and suffered to reign over him with unbridled sway. The evil spirits thus leave him half dead, for his body is mortal, though his soul is immortal, and thus he may be said to be half dead.

While in this condition, Aaron, the high priest, passed by and could not assist him by his sacrifice. Neither could the Levite (Moses) help him by the law. But after these there came by the Samaritan, even our Lord Jesus Christ, Who vouchsafed to journey through this life for our sakes. How truly may we say that our loving Lord had compassion upon man, dead in trespasses and sins, and poured into his wounds the oil of His mercy, and the wine or the blood of His compassion, and as He set him on His own beast, so does He bear our infirmities and carry our sorrows, and He brought him to an inn, His Church, the place of refuge for travellers and pilgrims, and there he lays down the man, saved from his peril, and put him in a way to be cured of his wounds, if he do but follow the direction of his Preserver. He took care of him. O

blessed Jesus! Thou dost truly take care of the weary travellers, for sooner can a woman forget her sucking child than Thou Thy people; and Thou hast commanded Thy servants to care for those whom Thou hast left in Thy Church, and who await Thy return in that great day, when Thou wilt reckon with them. "He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and look what he layeth out, it shall be paid to him again."

Behold thyself, O my soul, dead in trespasses and sins; see thy Saviour coming to thee; He anoints thee; He washes thee in His most precious blood; He brings thee into a place of safety. O cling to Him; be very obedient to His commands, for thou hearest Him say, "When I return," and then thou wilt have to render an account of the blessings and privileges granted thee. Would that thou couldst confidently look to having wherewithal to pay what thou hast received!



Saturday after Thirteenth Sunday.

Go, and do thou likewise.—St. Luke, x. 37.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord our God! and blessed be Thy mercy for ever. Thou hast performed Thy covenant and Thy promises to Thy unworthy creatures. Thou hast done enough to convince us unto faith, and to inflame us with love. Be with me in this my meditation, I beseech Thee, to the end that the one may be quickened, the other increased.

I must, in the first place, consider this command

as instructing me to consider as my neighbour all those who call for my compassion, I am to serve them to the utmost extent of my power, not regarding whether they be or be not of my own nation or religion; as I consider this parable, the term "neighbour," so often used in lightness and without thought, grows into a thing of great importance; and I must consider very gravely how I can better set about performing my duty, as regards those placed around me, both by the ties of blood, by nearness of dwelling, by calls upon compassion, or by any other circumstance. To effect this the better, I may take the parable in its higher sense, and considering the good Samaritan as a representation of our Lord and Saviour, I must devoutly consider all that He did in this life, and I must take the command, "Go, and do thou likewise," as expressing that I am to follow His blessed example as closely as possible. He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. See His great love and compassion; He came to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. See His long-suffering; He came to save men's lives, not to destroy them; to seek and to save that which was lost, and to give His life a ransom for many; and to give rest to the weary and heavy-laden; He prayed for His enemies; He promised paradise to the repentant thief. What more can I think of, to heighten my sense of my blessed Saviour's love and compassion? Nothing; for greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; and what do I? I think of my trouble when any one demands help from me; I deny myself nothing, and yet I see many around me wanting necessities. O my Saviour! how poor a follower am I of Thee! raise me, I beseech Thee

quicken my will, and make me very zealous in Thy service. When I think that to supply these my deficiencies, and to appease the justly provoked wrath of the Father, He took the burthen of all my sins, among others of that want of love, of which I feel so guilty; and that He actually suffered an agonizing, lingering death, I despise myself for my slowness and dulness. I ought to lead a life of continual penance, instead of forgetting so great benefits.

Resolve, O my soul, to carry always in thy remembrance these words of thy Saviour, "Go, and do thou likewise;" think upon what thou art, and what He endured for thee; think of His temptation, His fasting, His want, in that He knew not where to lay His head; think on His hunger and thirst; the cold and heat to which He was exposed; His weariness, while He went about doing good; His watchings, His nights of prayer; think of His meek endurance of insults, His agony; and then, if thou art not stirred up to spend and be spent in His service, be sure that thou hast a heart of stone, and pray with incessant, fervent supplication, that He will wound, pierce, and soften that hard heart; that He will make it impressible with His image, and that He will assist thee with the grace of His blessed Spirit, to pour in the oil and the wine, to help on the way, to recommend to the host at the inn, thy poor, sick, afflicted, and heavy-laden brethren.



St. Barnabas.

And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.—Acts, iv. 36, 37.

FOR ever blessed be the grace and consolation of our Lord, Who so eminently honoured this His disciple, by making him an instrument in the foundation of many glorious Churches, that not excepted wherein the name of Christian first began.

O Lord God Almighty, Who has built Thy Church upon the foundation of the apostles, under Christ the head corner-stone ; and didst for this endue Thy holy apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost : Leave me not destitute, I humbly beseech Thee, of Thy manifold gifts and talents, nor of the grace to make a right use of them, through Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Church, in commemorating the lives of the Saints, shews the different ways in which faith operated in men of different stations in life and different characters.

What a touching name is given to this saint : the son of consolation ! His faith manifested itself in the desire he shewed to apply the healing balm of the cross to the several kinds of affliction. What a sublime and holy character ! I can see the devoted man shewing to the sick in body the wounds

of their Saviour ; to the sick in mind, His agony in Gethsemane ; to the poor he spoke of Him who had no place to lay His head ; to the captive, he shewed the cords of His bitter bondage ; to the dying he held up the cross, on which, once for all, hung the ransom, which rescued us all from the valley of the shadow of death ; to the rich, Barnabas himself gave the example ; he was rich himself, but he sold all, and left the money to the disposal of others.

My soul, art thou ready to go about consoling the afflicted ? Thou sayest, "But I have no possessions, I can sell nothing to give to them that lack." Herein lurks thy pride, O my soul ; thou thinkest if thou hadst possessions, thou wouldst willingly give all. Why dost thou not give now what thou hast ? True, it will not shew like silver and gold, still it is what thou hast. Why canst thou not give a kind look to that suffering man ? A smile might cheer the heart of that sick infant more than all the gold of the mines. A word in season may check a life of sin. An encouraging sentence may strengthen the weak-hearted. Think not that money will stand in the place of sympathy, but give to others of those gifts which God has bestowed upon thee, and leave to those on whom Providence has bestowed riches, the care of dispensing according to their gifts.

Barnabas gave not himself, he laid all at the apostles' feet. Imitate this example, O my soul ; if at any time thou hast wherewithal to relieve the wants of others, place it in the hands of God's appointed ministers. So doing thou wilt perhaps mortify vanity, and exercise self-denial, but thou wilt have followed the example of the son of consolation.

MY song shall be of mercy and judgment :
unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing.

O Let me have understanding : in the way of
godliness.

When wilt Thou come unto me : I will walk in
my house with a perfect heart.

I will take no wicked thing in hand ; I hate the
sins of unfaithfulness : there shall no such cleave
unto me.

A froward heart shall depart from me : I will
not know a wicked person.

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour : him
will I destroy.

Whoso hath also a proud look and high stomach :
I will not suffer him.

Mine eyes look upon such as are faithful in the
land : that they may dwell with me.

Whoso leadeth a godly life : he shall be my ser-
vant.

There shall no deceitful person dwell in my
house : he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my
sight.

I shall soon destroy all the ungodly that are in
the land : that I may root out all wicked doers
from the city of the Lord.



St. John the Baptist.

And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

St. Matthew, xiv. 10.



GRANT, O God, that I may improve myself
by meditating, and endeavouring to imitate
the life of this great saint ; that I may learn
of him those excellent lessons of humility, mortifi-

cation, self-denial, zeal, and courage, which we may gather from his history ; grant it, I beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice, and patiently to suffer for Christ's sake ; these are the virtues which the Church points out for special imitation, in considering the life of John the Baptist.

What a wonderful history is that of the messenger sent before the face of our Lord, to prepare His way before Him ! Consider the prophecies, so precise that they cannot be for a moment mistaken ; the description of that preaching of the doctrine of repentance, which afterwards came to pass ; and, when the time was come, the appearance of the heavenly messenger to Zacharias ; the wonderful announcement of that angel ; the punishment of disbelief in Zacharias ; the opening of his mouth when all was fulfilled ; the retirement of the sacred child in the wilderness ; his coming forth, bursting out before the multitudes with his astonishing cry, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord !" his successful preaching, turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just ; his boldly rebuking the wickedness of Herod ; being cast into prison ; and then falling a victim to the bad passions of a licentious woman, and to the weakness of an unprincipled man ! being beheaded in prison. Here is a history of the life of one of God's saints, one sent on earth for a particular purpose ! here is no ease, no quiet, no luxury, no flattery of friends ; nothing but hard living, hard labour, and a hard death. What an encouragement is this to the wearied and heavy laden ! they may well find that their troubles need give them no doubt of their

God's love and mercy, any more than we can doubt of His love and entire approval of St. John the Baptist.

A hard task may some day be set me; to speak the truth may one day be as great a trial of my faith, as it must have been to John's disciples to see him cast into prison; to rebuke sin, especially among the great, and powerful, and rich, may possibly fall to my lot; and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake, may be my portion; patiently? let me consider whether it will be patiently. If I have to suffer, I may be sure that the reality will be as different from my anticipations as is possible.

It is glorious to think of suffering for truth's sake! but should the truth be everywhere spoken against; should I be counted an idiot; should the rich, the powerful, the great, be all against me; should I be cast into a lonely prison, without even the sympathy of others, without food to sustain me, and after languishing in a dungeon, should I be deprived of life without opportunity of defending myself; without a word passing from the lips of the cruel executioners, that I died in full faith and blessed hope! May I hope to have faith patiently to suffer under such circumstances?

Can I look on this prospect and not feel love and admiration for the character of St. John the Baptist, and still more love and gratitude to God, Who giveth such large measures of grace to His chosen servants, and gives to us such bright examples and such great encouragements?

O my soul, take heed that thou repent according to the preaching of this great saint; the kingdom of heaven is at hand. All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word

of our God endureth for ever! Repent, therefore, O my soul; take great courage and speak the truth constantly, that all men may know thee to be a servant of the Lord Jesus; boldly rebuke vice, and if thou art counted worthy to suffer, even in the meanest, lowest way, do so patiently, for the sake of that truth, for which John Baptist prepared the way.

ALMIGHTY God by Whose providence Thy servant John Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of Thy Son our Saviour, by preaching of repentance; make us so to follow his doctrine and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuking vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



St. Peter.

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matthew, xvi. 16.



OLORD, grant, I beseech Thee, that by meditating on the example set by this apostle, I may gather strength and courage to be ready to confess Thee before men; to suffer for Thy sake; and if Thou wilt, to die for Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

How thankful ought I to be to God for bringing, as it were, His saints, one by one, before me, to

enable me to contemplate in them, the different qualities which each has perfected in himself. This contemplation does not cause me to stop in admiration of the holy men themselves, though in their strength there is very much for my weakness to admire and endeavour to imitate; but I am carried upward from man to God, from the creature to the Creator, Who brings such great things to pass for His glory, and Who out of weakness brings forth strength. St. Peter, at first a simple fisherman, casting his net in the sea of Galilee, is called by our blessed Lord, and becomes a fisher of men. He is bold; he is ardent; he loves his Lord with all the fervour of a generous nature, and he seems to be fully impressed with our Lord's divinity; he confesses that He is the Son of God, and this confession our blessed Lord declares to be the revelation of God to him. Peter was present at the transfiguration of our Lord, at that blessed time when heaven came down to earth, and when a voice was heard from the excellent glory: "This is my beloved Son." He saw His glory; he was also witness of His deep humiliation, of His bitter agony in the garden. Peter had said, "Though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee." Alas! Peter was among those who forsook Him and fled. Peter denied our blessed Lord, and his own dear Master: "Man, I know not what thou sayest; and immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew, and the Lord turned and looked on Peter." O gracious Saviour, Thy gentle reproving look brought Thy erring disciple back to his faith. He had fancied himself strong; he might have strengthened himself against the direct attacks of bitter persecution, but ridicule and sarcasm he could not stand. That blessed look brought Peter's better self to his aid;

he remembered his God ; he thought on all his Saviour was to him ; he saw his own faithlessness, and he went out and wept bitterly.

This is thy lesson, O my soul ; thou thinkest thyself strong in thy faith ; thou art determined no power shall separate thee from thy Saviour ; thou art willing to go through persecutions for His sake. Thy trial may not come in that way : some time, when thou least expectest, "when thou art standing over the fire warming thyself," a sarcastic word, a scornful look, a bitter jest, may throw thee off thy guard. Oh, if such be the case, may thy gracious Saviour turn and look round upon thee ! May He at once cast the beams of His blessed countenance into thy soul, and mayest thou share St. Peter's tears, as thou hast shared his sin.

But that look has turned the soul of Peter ; he is henceforth bold, steady, firm, mild ; and with unflinching courage ever after stands forth to declare that Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the stone rejected of the builders, is become the head of the corner.

Thou art permitted, O my soul, to see how God's holy ones go on from strength to strength ; set up for thyself the highest standard of perfection ; aim at it, be ever striving to reach it. Thy constant endeavours will lift thee above the defilement of thy sins, and by the assistance of His holy Spirit, thou mayest hope for the attainment of some of those virtues which distinguish the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs.


Lord Jesus, my blessed Saviour, turn on me Thy gracious looks to correct me when in error ; to encourage me in virtue ; to lead me on to glory. O grant me a clear spiritual perception of Thy constant presence with me, of Thy watchful care of me ;

and make me to love Thee as did Thy blessed apostle Peter; to confess Thee as manfully as he did; and if Thou so willest it, to die for Thee; but if Thou willest otherwise, let me take indifference, scorn, and contempt, as the cross on which Thou wilt have me suffer for Thy dear sake. *Amen.*



St. James.

Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?—St. Matthew, xx. 22.

RANT me, I beseech Thee, O Lord, at the call of Thy grace, the same readiness as Thy apostle St. James, to quit all my worldly affections and engagements, and to apply myself wholly to become a worthy disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end.

St. James the son of Zebedee, the elder brother of St. John the apostle, was one of those disciples, to whom our Lord was pleased to shew a more particular favour and love; he was one of the three chosen to be witnesses of the glory of the transfiguration; one of the three admitted to be present at the raising to life of the daughter of Jairus; one of the three whom He took along with Him, to stay and watch with Him in His prayer and agony in the garden.

How great must have been the faith and love of St. James, that he should have been so chosen and favoured by Jesus. How happy may they consider

themselves, who, like St. James, stay close to Jesus ; partaking of His sorrows, of His sufferings, and, it may be, admitted also to His glories !

St. James had the glorious privilege of being the first among the apostles who laid down his life for the love of his Master, and sealed His doctrine with His blood. O glorious death, to die for love, not of mortal honour, or earthly glory, but for the love of our most loving Lord, Who is the true everlasting life ! How happy are those sufferings, that are endured for the love of Christ !

My soul, art thou able to drink of this cup, and to be baptized with this baptism ? Pause, and recollect thyself ; imagine thy Saviour asking thee this question. He knows, as He knew when the mother of James and John asked for honour and distinction for her sons ; He knows the sorrows, and the labours, and the sufferings, which thou must endure if thou unite thyself with Him ; but the reward He declares not ; it is unspeakable ; but He wills that those who follow Him be His for His sake alone, and not for the sake of any glories or distinctions that may be given. In fact, the reward is Himself. If we walk close to Jesus, we walk in peace ; the world may frown, but Jesus smiles ; we may be called upon to shed our blood for His sake, but the Cross, and the Blood there shed, and the tortures there endured, have taken the sting from all future pangs ; Jesus was there, and He will be with me even if I am baptised with His own baptism of blood.

O how true it is that we know not what we ask, when we would have riches, or honours, or pleasures ; we know not even when we ask to follow Jesus, what may be included in the petition, for it may bring us to that fearful baptism of blood. Lord, let me

drink of Thy cup, even of the bitter cup of Thy passion; let me take up my cross, and follow Thee; let this bring me, in Thy own good time, to Thy kingdom, there to sit down, and live with Thee eternally.

My soul, resolve to keep close to thy Lord; ask not to see thy way; work, suffer, love as He wills; be diligent, but seek for nothing of distinction, for no power; for nothing but Jesus, Jesus only; then sit down in deep humility, take the lowest place; it may be thou wilt be called up higher, but in the mean time endeavour to drink of that blessed cup, which thy Saviour holds out to thee, in steadfast faith and loving hope, that He will one day give thee a mansion, if only the last and lowest, in His glorious kingdom.



St. Bartholomew.

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people.—Acts, v. 12.



GOD, Who by the martyrdom of Thy blessed apostle Bartholomew, refreshest in our memories the glorious attestations which Thy Providence has vouchsafed the world for the confirmation of Thy truth; grant us, we beseech Thee, with such profit to meditate on his pains and labours in propagating the gospel, that our faith may be strengthened, and more diligently applied to carry us on in the same race, and that finally we may all attain the same happy consummation and bliss, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

History tells me that St. Bartholomew ended a

life devoted to the spread of the gospel, by a cruel and most painful death. His faith must have been strong indeed to have led him to such bitter endurance, and yet Holy Scripture tells us little or nothing of him; he is mentioned among the apostles, and though most suppose him to be the same person as Nathaniel, yet we have no certain evidence that such was the case. He lived in obscurity and died a painful death, further than this, we, who come after, are not permitted to know much of his history; but this in itself is an important lesson; a great work was wrought by St. Bartholomew; he was one of those who wrought signs and wonders; God does sometimes choose the obscure, the meek, the lowly ones of His fold, to do great things; and the reason of this is, that we should give God the glory, and stay not our minds on men.

The Church this day bids me, by the example of this saint, truly to believe, and to preach the gospel. Truly to believe, I must, like Bartholomew, have such a lively faith, such a love for the Word which he believed, that I must be content, if it be God's will, to live in silence and obscurity, and to die the most painful of deaths. Can I in this imitate the example set before me? or is my faith so strong, my love so pure, that I can look unto the Author and Finisher of my faith, as my sole and sure reward, without longing for praise of men, or fame, or honour, or any of those gifts which the world plentifully bestows upon her children?

Let me conclude by resolving to act always with a martyr's spirit, and if God in His gracious Providence, sees fit to place me in a lowly and obscure situation, let me do my duty therein silently and contentedly, and by my patient continuance in well doing, let me preach by my example, and receive

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity. 277

with devout love the Word for which St. Bartholomew laid down his life.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who didst give to Thine apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe and to preach Thy Word; grant, we beseech Thee, unto Thy Church, to love that Word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same: through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.—Galatians, v. 16.

HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open my eyes, enlarge my mind, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

I must bring before me, that there are two ways, or roads, in which I am able to walk in this life; I am allowed to take my choice. One path leads to heaven—the other to everlasting misery. Before I was of age to take my choice of these two ways, God, all merciful and gracious, placed me in that which was to be for my good; of myself I could not choose what was right; sin reigned in my mortal body; but I was washed and purified, made fit to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; my body was made a temple of the Holy Spirit, and I then was sent forward on my pilgrimage. And I thank my God, that, having placed me in the right path, He

has, by the preventing grace of His Spirit, led me along it ; though alas ! I have too often turned aside, too often stumbled ; and these hindrances have prevented me from advancing as far as, from my means and opportunities, I should have done.

But the flesh and the spirit are adversaries ; the law of my members is contrary to the law of my mind ; there is a constant struggle going on within me, and, as far as I can see, will continue to go on within me until my life's end. This is a wearisome thought ; but I must reflect on the glorious end ; of the reward for so great labour ; I must not be weary and faint in my mind.

Let me steadfastly endeavour to make my body a fitting place for the Holy Spirit to dwell in ; let me look beyond the failing, empty pleasures of this life, to the never-ending joy and peace which attend a life fitting me for the world to come. Let me seriously set myself to bring under my body, to wage continual war against all the lusts of the flesh ; let me bring my mind and thoughts to the content and purity which must be attained if the Holy Spirit is to be my guest. Let me guard my words, and keep my tongue as with a bridle. Let me remember that the all-seeing God watches my actions ; and let me walk soberly, holily, honestly. But all this requires a strength which of myself I cannot attain to. This constant watchfulness to guard me from my foes, within and without, will wear me out long before the time arrives that I may relax my care. Get thee to thy God, O my soul ; be instant in prayer ; beseech Him to renew thy strength day by day ; take every means which He commands thee of walking in the Spirit ; pray, attend the services of His temple, be full of good works and almsdeeds, and approach constantly the holy altar, there to partake of

Monday after Fourteenth Sunday. 279

those strengthening and refreshing symbols which to thee will be the holy Body and precious Blood of thy Saviour; thou partake with faith, nothing doubting. By God's grace assisting thee, thou shalt have success in thy endeavours; thou wilt walk in the Spirit, and gain peace of conscience here, and eternal happiness hereafter.



Monday after Fourteenth Sunday.

The works of the flesh are manifest.

Galatians, v. 19.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open my eyes, enlarge my mind, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

When I meditate upon the dreadful list of sins produced by the depravity of our unrestrained nature, I imagine that it is impossible for me to be guilty of any so heinous as the least of those mentioned in it. This thought is presumptuous, and shews a dangerous state of security, from which I must be aroused. Of the first-named sins, those of impurity, I may hope ever to be free; but still I must guard every avenue of the senses, and let no thought enter my mind which will not bear exposure, not only before all my fellow men, but before the tremendous majesty of the all pure God.

There are other works of the flesh from which I may be in constant danger. There is idolatry; if I do not fall down before a graven image, do I bear

such doting fondness for any of God's creatures as to commit any offence for its sake, forgetting the law of my Maker? Does any creature stand before and obscure my perception of the presence of God? Witchcraft is hardly a sin of these days, although there may be an unholy curiosity which would withdraw the veil from before the Holy of Holies. Hatred—oh what a hateful sin—how detestable in the sight of Him, Who is love! I have dislikes and prejudices against some persons; let me do them away—they are works of the flesh—they will in the end lead to hatred.

Variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies; how willing am I to dispute when any one differs from me in opinion! How anxious to gain the praise of men, by excelling others! How soon made angry! How apt to find fault with rules and laws! How easily led by insufficient authority in matters of faith.

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings; how prone am I to wish for the possession of qualities I see in others! how apt to think ill of others! how pleased to gratify my appetite in eating and drinking! how fond of company, and light conversation, and jesting!

Having received the gift of the Spirit, and being put in the way of resisting the flesh, let me steadily go on in a regular course of self-examination, self-discipline, and self-abnegation; I must not rely on my own strength, although I must exert it constantly and steadily in mortifying the beginnings of evil. God will not send me His help, unless I add my endeavours to His assistance. Pray, then, oh my soul, for grace, with humility and perseverance. This will be thy support; from this thou mayest hope for victory. Fly all occasions of sin; if thou

yield, even once, for a very little, thou art undone. And ever reflect with horror on those who go on sinning against light, against grace, giving way to every evil passion, fulfilling all the lusts of the flesh, until they become earthly, sensual, devilish. They quench the Holy Spirit ; it departs from them entirely. Is there hope for such ?

Try not such a fearful experiment ; but pray always earnestly, and with a strong supplication, and the Spirit will assist thee ; only remember to persevere, to be instant in season and out of season, never to be faint or weary, or discouraged, but to stand girt with the spiritual armour, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of that faith which will lead to everlasting life.



Tuesday after Fourteenth Sunday.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love.—Galatians, v. 22.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open my eyes, enlarge my mind, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

At baptism, the gift of the Spirit was conferred upon me ; it was then cast on the barren and dry land of my soul, and as seed, left either to grow and strengthen, and spread over the soil, or to wither and perish for lack of nourishment and attention.

The seed of grace thus sown must be cultivated, watered, tended, watched, and nourished, before it

can grow to such perfection as to yield fruit. First, the ground must be made fit for its increase. All evil weeds and stones must be extirpated. All bad passions, evil habits, and unrestrained desires must be rooted out ; the soil must be rendered fertile by prayer, by instruction, by the dew of God's blessing, by frequent attendance on the means of grace, especially the Holy Communion. The constantly springing weeds must be detected by frequent self-examination. The tears of penitence must fertilize those parts from whence these weeds have been expelled ; and constant and earnest must be the entreaties to the Lord God to look down from heaven and behold and visit this vine. To such earnest endeavours I doubt not, but earnestly believe, that God will grant that His Holy Spirit shall bring forth His fruit in due season ; He will come down like the rain into a fleece of wool, even as the drops that water the earth.

Let me now consider the blessed fruits of His holy and life-giving Spirit. First, there is *love*. The growth in grace is not to be obtained without all the pains I have above considered as necessary to be taken with a barren and dry land ; for this end how often, how constantly must I approach the Throne of Grace, and falling prostrate before the King of kings, contemplate His glories, His Majesty, His Almightyness, in comparison with my own insignificance and nothingness. How can I contemplate all the mighty mysteries of His redeeming love, without being myself melted into love for all His unmerited bounties ? How can I turn my eyes upon the cross without marvelling at the love which underwent such stupendous sufferings ? How can I turn in unto myself and behold my body and limbs fearfully and wonderfully made, my mind fur-

Wednesday after Fourteenth Sunday. 283

nished with reason, my soul with this inestimable gift of the Spirit—how can I look all around me, and see the beauty, the design, the order, the regularity, of creation—how can I look into the face of each man with whom I meet, and see in it the image of God, (though defaced, still His image,)—without feeling this love expand and grow in my heart, and without experiencing a longing desire to draw all souls redeemed by the most precious blood of the Lamb, together with myself, to a closer union with the most loving and gracious Master, in Whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at Whose right hand there is pleasure for evermore.

My soul, remember that love is the very essence of the inward life, that divine life of the soul which causes thee to dwell constantly in the presence of thy Lord. Cultivate this love, this universal tenderness, to its utmost extent; let no root of bitterness remain in thee; but, dwelling in love with all men, thou mayest proceed to love, to the utmost capability of thy erring nature, that blessed Lord God, Who has showered upon thee such multiplied proofs of His love.



Wednesday after Fourteenth Sunday.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

Galatians, v. 22.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open my eyes, enlarge my mind, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

Let me, in the first place, consider that these gifts of the spirit are the free, unmerited gift of God ; they are not obtained by any exertions I make myself, although God expects my co-operation, when the seed has been sown, to bring forth the fruit to perfection. But I must never rely on my own strength ; I must absolutely place myself in the hands of the Almighty, and seek humbly and earnestly His good and precious gifts.

O God, Thy goodness obliges me to love Thee ; in Thee are centred all perfections ; Thy bounty is infinite as Thy power ! Day by day Thou givest me fresh proof of Thy love ; and I know that by placing all my trust in Thee, I shall be saved from all harm.

In feeling this sure confidence, I must be filled with joy ; not the joy which arises from sense, but that which proceeds from having God for our hope and strength, Christ for our stay and refuge, the Holy Spirit for our guide and guard. But let me remember that this joy can never arise in a breast which is not wholly given to God, which rests not wholly on the merits of its Saviour, which clings not to the Cross as the only rest from labour and safeguard in danger, and which is not purified by the precious blood thence flowing—a fountain ever open for sin and for uncleanness. Joy is only for those who, having crucified their affections and lusts, count all things loss, so they may win Christ, and who, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith, behold with Him the joy set before them, passing by crosses, and struggles, and dangers in this world with unchanged minds ; because they see beyond them a better country, and One at Whose right hand there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

Together with this joy comes peace—the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. I can picture to myself one standing amid the tumults, and cares, and toils, and jarrings of the world, whose mind, wholly resting upon God, is no ways disturbed by the clamour about him; he goes serenely on his way, dispensing bounties all around him, untainted by the world; the peace of God is in his heart, and he fears no evil; he knows that God is with him, and His rod and His staff they comfort him.

Love, joy, peace! O my soul, what heavenly thoughts do these words inspire! and yet how dost thou fall short, in cultivating the reality within thee!

Nothing, O Jesus, is able to aid me, but Thy grace! Instil it into my heart, that I may cultivate these graces here, and receive recompense hereafter.



Thursday after Fourteenth Sunday.

Long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

Galatians, v. 22.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open my eyes, enlarge my mind, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

Let me in the first place consider the great example set us of long-suffering, or patience, by Christ Himself. His patient endurance of insults, reviling, scourging, mocking; all the passages of His life shew His long-suffering, His, Who could have called down fire from heaven to consume His ene

mies. Let me also consider the long-suffering of God, in sparing *me*, who so deserve punishment, whose sins, many and grievous, were no less the occasion of the death of Christ than the traitor Judas. These considerations ought to strengthen my endeavours after the attainment of this virtue of long-suffering. I may be sure that the stronger my endeavours become, the more I shall need the grace; for however I am placed, I shall have many occasions of exercising myself in it. Sometimes I may have bodily infirmities; sometimes mental troubles; now malice may attack my fame; and now injustice may damage my estate; poverty may oppress me; and my own sins and infirmities, and the difficulties I have in overcoming them, may almost drive me to despair. All these may come upon me, and how shall I encounter them? With meekness and yielding?—with murmurs and repining? Oh! good Lord, grant that the fruit of the spirit may be manifest in me, and give me patience, that, after I have done Thy will, I may receive the promise.

With long-suffering comes gentleness; as tender sisters they walk hand in hand; and as the first bears all things, the second forbears, and deals lightly with every thing but her own failings. She is charitable to all, but to herself severe; her care soothes the sufferings of her afflicted brethren, pouring in the oil of consolation into their wounds; and by the purity of her presence she makes even the sinful despise their own grossness and admire her virtue.

The next fruit is goodness, which avoids all sin, everything which is not purity itself. It studies to follow the laws of God, and to lead others in the same way. It promotes the welfare of others, and

forgets self, except to mortify it, and bring all into subjection to the law of God.

O my soul, how much hast thou to do ! Go on, work, watch, pray ; be not weary or faint in thy mind ; but persevere, and in God's own time He will give thee the increase of these thy labours.



Friday after Fourteenth Sunday.

Faith.—Galatians, v. 2.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open my eyes, enlarge my heart, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

Let me consider how unprofitable all my endeavours would be without *faith*. I believe, but that is not enough ; I must apply my belief to every action and event of my life, to every thought and word. I must see in God the Father, One Whose eye is ever upon me, Whose paternal love has supplied me with every blessing and every good, but Who is, nevertheless, a jealous God—Almighty—infinitely just, but infinitely merciful. I see in God the Son, Jesus, my Saviour, Who, being rich, for my sake became poor, Whose conception and birth cleansed my conception and birth ; Whose sufferings were what I owed ; Whose cross removed the curse of the law ; Whose death took away the sting of death ; Whose burial saved me from eternal destruction in the tomb ; Whose descent shut the gates of hell ; Whose resurrection was the first-fruits of them that sleep ; Whose ascension assures me

of a place in heaven preparing for me ; Whose session at the right hand of God assures me of His intercession ; and Whose return to judgment I also look for.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, whose power from on high transforms unto sanctity, and through Whom alone I can hope to bring forth fruits of this my faith.

In the Holy Church, I see a body called out of an unbelieving and ungodly world, unto intercourse in faith and holiness. In the communion of saints, members of this body, I look for a mutual participation in holy things, for confidence in remission of sins, for hope of resurrection, and of life eternal.

Lord, I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief, and give me daily a clearer perception of the mysteries of Thy kingdom, that I may bring forth this fruit of Thy blessed Spirit.

Of meekness, I am in daily, hourly need. Even in matters of faith, how much do I want meekness, to accept all in an unhesitating, childlike spirit, trusting in God's goodness to measure out His Spirit to me in such abundance as that I may gradually see the light shining more and more brightly on what appeared obscure. The patient abiding of the meek will not always be forgotten ; let me ever remember this when tempted to feel in haste to have my wishes accomplished ; and absolutely place my cause in the Lord's hands, saying with the Blessed Virgin, who was herself a pattern of meekness, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word."

But in all things I have need of temperance. I must mortify my body, to bring it into subjection ; I must mortify my spirit, that all may be brought under the law of God. I must cultivate that even,

calm, recollected spirit, without which love would run into excess, joy into overheated passion ; long-suffering would become sullen ; gentleness would be inanition ; goodness, a visionary rapture ; faith, superstition ; and meekness, want of energy.

Oh, my soul, keep up an even balance within thee ; and keep thyself in entire subjection to thy Saviour ; follow His blessed example ; and run with patience the race set before thee, looking unto Him, Whose reward is with Him.



Saturday after Fourteenth Sunday.

And as He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off.

St. Luke, xvii. 12.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open my eyes, enlarge my heart, and grant that, though of myself I can do nothing, Thy strength may be sufficient for me.

Behold our blessed Lord travelling on foot ; on His painful journey, He has to pass through a country inhabited by a wicked people, enemies to His nation ; but He, nevertheless, dispenses mercies and blessings as He passes along. He is on the point of entering a village or small town ; several men approach Him ; they are lepers, and therefore not allowed to enter the town ; they see Jesus the Saviour ; they cry out, "Jesus, have mercy on us." He Who heareth prayer, would not heal them on the spot, but ordered them to go to the priests ; they obey, and as they go they are healed. But they re-

turn not to give thanks unto Him Who had done such great things for them; only one shewed gratitude, and he was a Samaritan, a stranger both to the covenant and to the promises.

I see in the command which kept the lepers out of the town, the great care which God takes, even of our bodily health; but leprosy is more than a disease—it is an impurity,—an uncleanness; as sin is to the soul, so is leprosy to the body; and as God kept the lepers from associating with their fellow men, so does He set our sins from us. The lepers stood at a distance; the law forbade them to approach, or to converse with any, lest they should communicate their distemper; they obeyed the law. As God has set my sins far from me—as far as the east is from the west—so must I be watchful never to make the slightest approaches towards those sins and those infirmities, which are peculiarly my temptations: I must shun them, I must shut them out of the citadel of my soul, and avoid them as the pestilent disease which is pronounced by the law emphatically, as unclean.

What drew the lepers to Jesus, but a sense of their infirmity? And can I hold back from Him, who am laden with guilt, wearied and heavy laden with the burden of my sins. If it please God to visit me with bodily afflictions, may I ever draw near to Jesus, and say to Him, O my Redeemer, I have long abused my health by offending Thee; I deserve to be deprived of the blessing; I resign myself to Thee, and only desire to turn my infirmity to the good of my soul. Oh! let me suffer now as Thy follower and child, and not hereafter as Thy enemy! The lepers were all cleansed, but only the Samaritan returned to shew his sense of the blessing bestowed on him. Let me beware lest, relying on the privi-

leges and advantages bestowed on me, I forget the foulness of my former state, and the unmerited mercy bestowed upon me; but let me, with the grateful Samaritan, tell out the praises of the Lord and Saviour, Who has wrought such wonders for me!

Glorify thy God, O my soul, when thou seest that He has healed thee, by His free unmerited grace, from the foulness of sin; thou canst never praise Him enough for His goodness, but remain ever prostrate at His feet, worshipping and adoring His great goodness, and His infinite power.



Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.—Galatians, vi. 12.



GOD, Thou art my God; Thou alone art my hope and strength; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The religion of the cross is one of humility; and if I be a follower of the cross, I must cast away all thoughts of pride, all glorying in self; lie low, suffer all, and be self-abased. This is the spirit in which I ought to be, if I profess to follow the steps of my Divine Master, of Him Whose last breath prayed for His persecutors, and Whose bitter cross ought to be sweet and precious to all true believers.

To suffer persecution is one of the ways in which we have to bear the cross; it is a painful truth, and

one from which the natural man shrinks, as from something which he would keep out of sight, that it is from the persecutions of our fellow men that we suffer most in this world. This is often our heaviest cross, and we have a natural propensity to make a fair shew in the flesh, lest we should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. Why this should be, is not easy to find out; but I must endeavour so to think on the subject, that should I be subjected to persecution, I may not be tempted to deny or make light of any of the blessed truths so precious to me. To appear religious seems to be the aim of most men; it is generally accounted a shame to be a scoffer or profane person; and yet, unless every one hold the religious opinions which happen to be in vogue with the particular party with whom he associates, he is liable to persecution, either by open rebuke, or what is less easy to bear, by jesting and scorn.

The persecutions of the openly irreligious are less dangerous; and to fall before them were a shame, although the struggle might be one in which cowardice might have to contend with the fear of bodily harm.

How much have I to thank God for placing me in an age and country in which active persecution is not known. I distrust my own courage to stand against the fiery trials to which our early martyrs were subjected; and yet, O my Saviour, the thought of Thee, the remembrance of Thy cross, and Thy patient endurance, raises such a spirit of love within me, that I almost feel that I have courage to run through the fire and grasp the crown which Thou hast laid up for Thy martyrs. But stay, presumptuous; art thou able to abide the jests and taunts of the world? dost thou never feel inclined to forego

some of thy observances, lest man should call thee over strict? Dost thou never moderate thy opinions before those from whom thou differest? Oh, never think of a martyr's crown until thou canst persevere in thy common every-day round of duty and observance, utterly regardless of the opinions of men, so thou knowest thou art walking in calm, regular, orderly obedience to thy heavenly Master—suffering, if He permit thee, thy little cross, and looking up in thankful adoration to Him Who hath given thee power to overcome, and whose cross is to thee the standard of thy faith, the token of thy victory.



Monday after Fifteenth Sunday.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Galatians, vi. 14.



GOD, Thou art my God; Thou alone art my hope and strength; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ.

What is the Christian's glory? Is it praise? Do we follow the steps of Jesus, and was He rich in worldly honour? No; He endured the cross, despising the shame. Was He rich? No; for our sakes He became poor. Was He powerful? No; He left the right hand of His Father, where He was enthroned in glory, and took upon Him the form of a servant. He had no beauty, that we should desire Him. What, therefore, are worldly honour,

riches, power? what is beauty of person or high birth? They are nothing; and the cross, its ignominy, its sufferings, its mortifications,—they are everything. God forbid, then, that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it must be *His* cross in which I must glory, not my own. I must only take what He offers, and never glory in self-inflicted burdens.

Let me therefore take up His cross—its sign is on my forehead—my spiritual existence began with it: its sign in the heavens will betoken then of that struggle in which I engaged as Christ's soldier and servant. Then the cross will be done away; the crown will succeed it; and we shall glory in our glorified Master, Who by that cross purchased the crown. I began life with the cross; I shall find it as I walk on in life; go where I will, and seek where I may, I shall not find a higher way above; nor a safer way, than the way of the holy cross. Let me therefore make up my mind to suffer in this life; let me count it joy to suffer tribulation for Christ's sake; and let me see in every thing the cross; pain of body; tribulation of spirit, dryness in devotion, trouble from without, and trouble in myself; let me see in all, the cross; but let it be the cross of Jesus Christ, not the heavy cross imposed by Satan, when wilful sin throws us in his way—that is a cross not to be gloried in, but to be dreaded. O may I never be led astray to glory in such!

O my blessed Saviour, give me Thy cross, that I may clasp it to me, and never let it go! Make sufferings amiable to me; give me the sweet peace consequent upon bearing meekly Thy cross; grant that I may lead a dying life—dying to myself, living more and more with Thee. O may I hang by Thee to the cross Thou hast appointed for me, and seeing

Thee always before me, may learn to glory in that cross, the token of our calling, the weapon of our warfare, and the emblem of our victory.

Tuesday after Fifteenth Sunday.

No man can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other ; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.—St. Matthew, vi. 24.



GOD, Thou art my God ; Thou alone art my hope and strength ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort ; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ.

The master of our hearts is the love which reigns in them. Let me then consider the danger I am in, if I give the least way in my heart, for the love of money, pleasures, or any worldly gratifications to enter. Let me not fancy myself secure from these temptations ; whatever gives me importance or favour in the eyes of men is always a snare into which I may fall imperceptibly, and mammon may begin to have dominion in a heart which I have *in words* devoted to God's service. Now, let me consider why, while I am serving God, I should not be able to give such service to the world as may forward my worldly views, and keep me uninjured in the eyes of my worldly friends. In the first place, I have our Lord's positive assertion, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon ;" and in the next place,

their maxims are quite opposite. Christ commands humility, pardon of injuries, self-denial, mortification. The world sneers at humility as folly, and esteems pride as a virtue ; it preaches up revenge, and stigmatizes a forgiving disposition as the mark of a weak mind ; it places happiness in the satisfaction of sense. How can principles so opposite be reconciled ? Humility cannot stand with pride, nor pardon with revenge. I cannot practise self-denial, and seek my own ease, nor at once gratify my own senses, and mortify them.

Thou canst not, O my soul, serve God and the world ; choose, therefore, which service thou wilt enter. Is there any doubt who deserves the heart but He Who made it ? He Who alone can fill it and satisfy it ?

In labouring for the world, all is anguish and vanity—a vain pleasure, and a real misery. Weary not thyself, therefore, in the pursuit of temporal goods, but labour for the true riches ; and though thy vocation leads thee to work *in* the world, pursue it with a heart fixed upon God, and be not *of* the world. Consecrate thy whole self—soul, body, senses, and limbs, everything—to the service of thy Heavenly Master ; follow His steps, obey His commands, and in dutiful obedience to Him, offer to Him thy worldly substance, thy bodily labours, thy mental efforts, thy dearest earthly ties ; let all be His, and He in return will give thee the true riches.—that glorious inheritance, eternal in the heavens, which fadeth not away, and which is more than ear hath heard, or eye hath seen, and which it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive.

OH glorious Jesus, who tookest upon Thee all our frailties, to bestow on us Thy perfections ;

Teach us to prize the joys of heaven, and part with all things else, to purchase Thee !

Make all the pleasures of this life bitter to our taste : let not their flatteries any more deceive us, nor superfluous cares perplex our mind. But may our chief delight be to think of Thee, and all our study to grow great in Thy love !



Wednesday after Fifteenth Sunday.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you.

St. Matthew, vi. 33.



GOD, Thou art my God ; Thou alone art my hope and strength ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort ; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ my Saviour.

My blessed Saviour bids me cast off all anxiety about food and raiment, from consideration of inferior creation. God our heavenly Father knows that I have need of these things, and if I walk in His commandments, and obey His laws, will provide for me. He Who for the transgression of man cursed the ground for his sake, will, for the sake of the righteous, cause it to be blessed to him ; but then I must remember the conditions ; absolute obedience, entire dependence on the mercy of Christ, personal exertions directed to the fulfilment of every jot and tittle of the divine law. And what is this but seeking the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ?

The kingdom of God is the everlasting reward, purchased by the blood of Jesus, for those who, in entire dependence on His merits, have worked out their salvation with fear and trembling—*worked*, which implies hard service, striving, active exertions, bending all the strength to the object. His righteousness is the way of piety by which I walk on towards that kingdom.

The kingdom of God! the habitation of His glory! the abode of the blessed! What blessed thoughts do these words convey! How can I but hasten to good, when I meditate on them, and casting aside all worldly considerations, seek only the attainment of such blessedness, the righteousness of Him through Whom alone I can be accounted righteous. If I seek His righteousness, I seek Jesus my Saviour, through Whom alone my manifold sins and shortcomings will be overlooked. I must then seek Jesus; I must glory in His cross; I must love what He loves, hate what He hates, seek to be led by Him, and following as He points onward and upward, may overcome all difficulties, be carried through all dangers, and finally rest with Him in His kingdom. If I am thus led by Jesus through the safe and narrow path, I can well perceive that the things of this world will lose their value in my eyes; still they are not to be neglected; and if the kingdom of God and His righteousness is my *first* object, the other things will be added unto me. I am not to neglect providing things honest in the sight of all men, but I am to take heed that my worldly callings obscure not the vision of God in my soul; I must work on, devoting my all to God, and He will add unto me all things that be necessary for me.

O my soul, let this be an additional motive to thee

Thursday after Fifteenth Sunday. 299

to do all things that thy hand findeth to do, with all thy might, consecrating every action to thy Divine Master, and through thy every day duties seeking His righteousness by the devout self-denying spirit in which thou performest all. O my Jesus, my Saviour, my only good ! impart unto me Thy righteousness, supply strength to my weakness, that I may not be discouraged by the difficulty which I find in separating my heart from the things of this world. O my Saviour, I would give my energy to my work, my heart to Thee ! Help me, gracious Lord, in this my hard task ; lead me in Thy righteousness ; and if I may but sit in the lowest place in Thy kingdom, I will joyfully submit to such privations of worldly good, as Thou, Physician of my soul, may see fit to ordain for me.



Thursday after Fifteenth Sunday.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

St. Matthew, vi. 34.



GOD, Thou art my God ; Thou alone art my hope and strength ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort ; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I yesterday considered our blessed Lord's command not to be careful for things of to-day. I am here forbidden to take thought for the morrow.

Sufficient for me is the time present ; I must leave to God the future, which is uncertain. By the morrow I here take any period of time which is not present, whether it be the morrow or next year ; and I understand that I am forbidden to fix my thoughts on things which are future, which would prevent my performing my present duties with all my mind. Almighty God keeps the morrow in His hand, while he deals out to me my daily bread, for which alone I am instructed to pray. Every day brings its own burden, its own toil, or affliction, or hardship ; and to bear these, God has promised the assistance of His Holy Spirit to those who ask it of Him faithfully.

But as I am to take no thought for the morrow, am I condemned for taking those measures for providing for the future which prudence dictates ? I do not so understand our Lord's words ; but inso-much as providing in some sort for the future may be part of to-day's duties, I may so employ myself. I must only be careful that such foresight prevent me not from fighting as God's soldier in the battle which is going on around me ; I must not be abstracted in the future, but must ever be active, girt about with the armour of God on the right hand and on the left, to keep off my enemies on every side.

Let me now consider this subject as concerns my inward life, and see that our blessed Saviour's command lies deeper than as relating merely to the common affairs of this world.

I examine my conscience ; I am startled and horror struck to see the house which ought to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, desolate and in ruins ; I see sins and infirmities, evil habits, and little trifling failings, in such numbers as to fill me with dismay.

I turn to God, my gracious Saviour, and beseech Him to take away my sins ; He hears me ; but I must co-operate with Him, and, by my own exertions, shew my faith in His power.

I desire to overcome my sins and infirmities, but they are many and great, and I sink down in despair at the task before me. Now is the time to take no thought for the morrow, but steadily to take *one* failing at a time ; correct that, walking in all the commandments of the Lord, with no anxious thought, but the one fixed endeavour to employ the present time in God's service, and to His glory, and I doubt not that I shall find His gracious word fulfilled ; the morrow will provide its own care, and in course of time its own reward for past labours ; for there is held out to me a prospect of a harvest of eternal love, to be provided by God. O Lord, grant that no anxious thought for the future may make me lose my present possession of Thee ; grant that in fulfilling the duty, overcoming the difficulties, struggling against the errors and failings belonging to each day as it rises, I may be serving Thee in the way Thou wouldst be served ; and grant that in all my doings, I may keep close to Thee, my Saviour and my God, looking unto Thee as my present Helper in this world, and my exceeding great Reward in the world to come !



Friday after Fifteenth Sunday.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.—St. Matthew, vi. 33.



GOD, Thou art my God ; Thou alone art my hope and strength ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort ; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I must remember that every day brings me nearer to death, judgment, and eternity ; let me, therefore, to-day, meditate upon the means I must take to defend myself against the severe scrutinies of death and judgment, and what will be my condition in eternity ; that is to say, how I can best seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

I must set a strict guard over my thoughts, words, and actions ; for of all these I must, one day, give an impartial account. Every night I must consider that death may be with me ere morning. I must think that death may overtake me ere the twelve busy hours are past. Repent, then, repent, O my soul, thou knowest not whether thou shalt see to-morrow's sun ; but this thou dost know, that thou shalt surely die.

There is no greater enemy to seeking righteousness, than delay. Let me not, therefore, despise the inward workings of the Spirit, lest I never find that for which I desire to seek. Let not the thoughts of living till I am old defer for an instant this search for righteousness, this looking towards the kingdom

of God, but let me give myself up to God now, and let me seek for His righteousness that my whole life may be trained up to His pattern.

I must not seek praise of men, either by vain flatteries or by sinful yielding. It is not man, but God, Who will sit in judgment over me.

Let my daily examination be whether I do really grow in grace, whether I do really seek the kingdom of God, and am nearer to the point of attaining unto His righteousness. To stand still is to go backward ; let me therefore press forward towards the mark of my high calling.

Let the gentleness of my deportment, towards all with whom I associate, shew that I seek Him Who is love.

Let me use my friends as one who is a follower of Jesus, the Master of St. John.

Let me behave towards my enemies as one whose Saviour is Jesus, Who prayed—"Father, forgive them."

Let me die to myself, that I may live unto God.

Let pity be always visible in my affections, courteousness in my works, humility in my dress and behaviour, modesty in my conversation, and patience under all my sufferings.

Let me constantly think on what has passed, and be ever questioning myself what evil have I done? what good have I omitted? how could I better have employed time mis-spent?

Let futurity be ever in my mind ; death, judgment, heaven, hell, the constant theme of my meditations.

Let my thoughts, morning and evening, dwell on the errors of the past, the promise of the future.

Let repentance be ever my theme, and thankfulness that God has given me time for that repentance.

My soul, remember in seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, that there are three things always above and over thee :—the All-seeing Eye, the Ear that hears everything, and the Books of His omniscience Who will come to judge thee. Keep ever before thee the presence of God ; this awful reality will keep thee in constant watch over thyself, in constant fear of offending Him.

O God, Thou God of holiness, guide me into all the duties of a holy and religious life. Grant that I may be enabled to do whatever Thou hast commanded, as regards my duty to Thee and to my neighbour.

O, that I might be holy as Thou art holy, pure as Thou art pure, and be found unblameable at the great day of the appearance of Thy Son, Jesus Christ !



Saturday after Fifteenth Sunday.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God.—St. Matt. vi. 33.



GOD, Thou art my God ; Thou alone art my hope and strength ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my weak effort ; keep me from all things that may hurt me, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let me consider first, that the things which are most apt to allure the children of this world, and to draw their affections after them, are honours, riches, and pleasures ; but their error is that they seek these things where they are not to be found, and suffer themselves to be imposed upon by false appearances.

True honours, true riches, true pleasures, are not to be found in the broad road of the world, nor in the ways of sin, but are to be met with, together with all other good things, in the land of the living. Here all the inhabitants are advanced to the highest dignity, even to a fellowship with the living God, and a partnership with Jesus Christ in His throne. Here all are a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, children and heirs of the King of kings. Here all are crowned for ever with immortal glory, which fadeth not away, and shineth far more brightly than the stars. These are precious things indeed; and truly worthy the Christian's ambition. And all these, O my soul, if thou pleasest, may be thine for ever.

Consider, also, the riches that flow in this land of promise, where the inhabitants want nothing, and enjoy all things. This beatitude of the saints is called in the Scripture "a kingdom," the kingdom of God; and such it is to all those happy souls, as in plenty of all things, wealth, power, greatness, and endless duration, it exceeds all the kingdoms of the world. The great treasure of this kingdom is the possession of God Himself, with all His riches. O my soul, what more can be desired?

This heavenly land flows with milk and honey, even pure and immortal delights, pleasures and joys. Here we shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of His house, and He will give us drink of His pleasures, as out of the river; for with Him is the well of life, yea, the great river of the water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb, to water all the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem, having the tree of life growing upon its banks, with all the variety of its excellent fruits.

And this same is that torrent of pleasure that eternally flows into the souls of God's servants, quite replenishing them, and filling all their powers, senses, and faculties, with inconceivable delight. O, who would not gladly part with all the satisfactions the world can afford for such immortal joys as these?

O my soul, be no longer a slave to worldly things, vain honours, false riches, and fading pleasures; turn away from this Egypt that can afford thee nothing but muddy water, incapable of quenching thy thirst, but seek thy true country, where thou shalt find all thou canst desire, and that for eternity.



Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.—Eph. iii. 14, 15.



BLESSED be Thy Name, O Holy Spirit of God, Who dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleasest, and workest all in all! Be unto me a comforter in sorrow, a protector against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frailties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

The Church directs my thoughts this day, in the collect, to herself, her own wants; and the epistle instructs me of what the Church consists; it is the whole family in heaven and earth who are called by the Name of the Lord Jesus, the only begotten of the Father. Lest I become too much abstracted in my own individual sins and wants, my own in-

firmities, negligences, and ignorances, it is well that I should be reminded that I am not my own, that I am Christ's, and that Christ does not adopt me solely and individually, but has placed me in a society, a large family, of which He graciously vouchsafes to be the Head. He has purchased it with His most precious Blood. When I consider that I belong to this family, I feel that there is more need of walking soberly, holily, honestly, and in all purity, than if I were an isolated being, set to work out my salvation alone. Being a member of a body, anything that happens to me must, more or less, affect that body; and if by my failings and sins I do despite unto the gift which I possess, I not only injure myself, but I defile the Church, and I count the Blood which purchased it an unholy thing. O, may it not be so! May I and all my fellow Christians in all things grow up in Him, Who is our Head, Jesus Christ, from Whom the whole body fitly compacted and knit together, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, may make increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.

Let me, therefore, though the least and last of this great family, keep myself in purity; in humble obedience to the commands of my Heavenly Father, and let me bow my knees to Him, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and humbly pray unto Him, saying: O God, Who gatherest Thy flock out of all nations into the saving fold of the holy Catholic Church, purchased by the precious Blood of Thy dear Son, wherein Thou hast, in Thy providence, graciously ordained bishops and pastors to feed Thy sheep and lambs, let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend the same, and because without Thee it can-

not continue in safety, preserve it evermore by Thy help and goodness; and so govern the minds of Thy servants, the bishops, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but may always make a wise and faithful choice of fit and worthy persons to serve in the ministry of Thy Church. Bless them all, I beseech Thee, and their Clergy, with courage, and strength, and fatherly care, to feed and guard their several flocks. Bless also the faithful with an humble and obedient love to their superiors, for Thy sake, that the clearness of truth, and the beauty of holiness, daily increase in this Thy Church, through the devout pursuance of their duties, by all, and that thus all may come at last into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Grant this, O Lord, for Thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*



Monday after Sixteenth Sunday.

That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.—Ephesians, iii. 16.

BLESSED be Thy Name, O Holy Spirit of God, Who dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleasest, and workest all in all! Be unto me a comforter in sorrow, a protector against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frailties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

What ardent words are these, used by St. Paul! What a divine prayer for the whole family named

of our Lord Jesus Christ ! They suggest to our minds what St. Paul earnestly desired for his children in Christ, and, therefore, what we should earnestly desire for ourselves. He knew that all men were conceived and born in sin ; he knew that it was only through that precious Saviour that they could have boldness and access to Him ; he knew that man was weak, that he neither could understand the height of the majesty of the Most High, nor the depth of His redeeming love ; He knew that although to will was present with him, yet how to perform that which was good he knew not, for there was another law in his members, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin.

All this evil, all this sin, St. Paul prayed might be put away from his beloved brethren. The riches of the glory of God are boundless, and great as are the sins and infirmities of human nature, yet we have redemption through the Blood of Jesus, and forgiveness of sins according to the richness of His grace, and the riches of His glory hath He shewn upon His chosen servants ; for He hath made that which was weak, and desperately wicked, strong and holy ; He hath strengthened them with might by His Spirit. And this is what St. Paul besought the Lord for these Ephesian converts ; they were babes in Christ, they were only just recovered from the errors of heathenism ; they saw their beloved pastor beset with tribulation and persecution, and their spirit waxed faint ; their own struggles and the sorrows of St. Paul were too much for them, and, therefore, the prayer for strength, according to the riches of the glory of God. O the depth of the riches of God ! The earth is full of the riches of His glory !

For thee, also, O my soul, this prayer is very ne-

cessary. Thou art sinful; thy holiest things are weak and imperfect; thou art easily led aside from thy duty; temptations are too strong for thee; sorrows make thee quail; persecutions, distresses, sickness, all these in their turn weaken thy steadfast trust in the Most High, or at least thou dost not experimentally reap the fruit of that faith which thou professest.

What canst thou do but pray that God, according to the riches of His glory, will strengthen thee with might in the inner man—that hidden man of the heart which is operated upon by the Holy Spirit. How much hast thou need of this divine strength, O my soul! How sadly weak art thou when put to the proof! Cast thyself before thy Lord and Saviour; beseech Him to aid thee; depend upon Him alone; His sufferings, and His most precious Blood have purchased thee that which will give thee strength, if only thou rely solely on Him, and therefore be strong and of good courage. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and then, even when thou art most weak, thou shalt have more abundant strength; through the riches of the glory of thy gracious Lord God.



Tuesday after Sixteenth Sunday.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

Ephesians, iii. 17.

BLESSED be Thy Name, O Holy Spirit of God, Who dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleasest, and workest all in all! Be unto me a comforter in trouble, a protector against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frail-

ties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

Let me consider that I was born in sin; that I was washed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit in baptism; I there was made a member of Christ—a purchase of His precious Blood. I know that I am an object of the love of God; He has spared me when I deserved punishment. He has shewn His long-suffering and goodness towards me, and I am precious in His sight.

But I have sinned, I have sinned often and grievously; I have gone on sinning, I have turned aside from the right way, and have forgotten the glorious privileges to which I was heir; I have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. But many times a poor and lowly Man has knocked at the door of my heart; He was a stranger, He had the form of a servant, His appearance bore evidence of suffering, He was wounded and bruised; He knocked often and I knew Him not then, He came when I was in sorrow, He came when I rejoiced, and by little and little I knew Who He was, I acknowledged my Saviour, I bowed down before my God. Then did I bewail my ignorance and blindness and the hardness of my heart, that I had not known Him sooner; I saw my God, and I looked upon myself, and behold I was naked of every good work; and worse than that, I was defiled by sin. But I besought the Lord to forsake me not, and although I knew that I was unworthy that He should come under my roof, yet I knew Him to be merciful, I begged Him to speak the word; to purge me with the hyssop of His discipline that I might be clean; to wash me with His Blood, that I might be whiter than snow; to make me a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within me.

Then, O gracious Saviour, dwell with me; leave me not, O my God, but be ever with me. I desire to be pure, I desire to be holy, I long to be Thine; I believe, Lord, help Thou mine unbelief. O dwell in my heart, O Christ, my God, and let it never give room for any earthly affection. Be Thou within me to strengthen me, without me to cover me, before me to lead me, behind me to keep me from turning back, round about me to keep off mine enemies on every side.



Wednesday after Sixteenth Sunday.

That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.—Ephesians, iii. 18, 19.

BLESSED be Thy Name, O Holy Spirit of God, Who dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleasest, and workest all in all! Be unto me a comforter in trouble, a protector against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frailties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

Christ, my blessed Saviour, has knocked at the door of my heart; He had compassion on the miserable, ruined habitation, and He stooped low and entered. I received of His fulness, but I knew not, neither have I any faculty to understand now, the immensity of the love which deigned to choose so lowly a habitation. O may the eyes of my understanding be enlightened, that I may by degrees com-

prehend some part of the great mysteries that are wrought for us and in us.

But how can I express myself so as to reach the height of these mysteries: God made Flesh for me; the near approach of that gracious Being to my soul; the length of His patience; the breadth of His love; the depth of His mercy; the height of His glory; and with all this, His vouchsafing to come to me, an utter sinner; there is in it the highest honour and the lowest abasement; the greatest power and the extremest weakness; an excess of majesty and the most extreme frailty. What is more sublime than God, and what more vile than man? What greater than the power of the Almighty, and what weaker than the infirmities of man? What exceeds the height of the glory of God, what the depth of the wretchedness of man? Yet this Almighty Power contrived a means to join all together, when His infinite justice, which had been offended, necessarily called for such a union. An infinite satisfaction was demanded for the offence of man; but what could be equivalent to the infinity of God's nature? Infinite Justice takes, as it were, from itself a sufficient price due to itself. And God suffers in our flesh, lest we, who are the work of His Hands, should undergo an eternity of misery.

Infinite Goodness was offended; none but an infinitely powerful Mediator could intercede for us. God is infinite; God reconciled a sinful world and became a Mediator for us; God, with the price of His blood, purchased the redemption of mankind. O, how can I comprehend this great mystery! O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Come unto me, gracious Saviour! dwell with me, O Jesus!

Enlighten, I beseech Thee, my understanding, that I may grow in the knowledge of Thy incomprehensible greatness, goodness, and mercy; and that as Thou hast sown the good seed of Thy grace in my heart, it may, day by day, grow and increase in me, until I am filled with all the fulness of God.

THY mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens :
and Thy faithfulness unto the clouds.

Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains : Thy judgments are like the great deep.

Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast ; how excellent is Thy mercy, O God : and the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.

They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house : and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures, as out of the river.

For with Thee is the well of life : and in Thy light shall we see light.

O continue forth Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee : and Thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart.



Thursday after Sixteenth Sunday.

*Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold,
there was a dead man carried out.*

St. Luke, vii. 12.

BLESSED be Thy Name, O Holy Spirit of God, that dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleasest, and workest all in all !
Be unto me a comforter in trouble, a protector

against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frailties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

Behold our gracious Saviour accompanied by a band of faithful disciples, and followed by a multitude of people, attracted by His mighty deeds and the divine wisdom of His sayings; they approach the gates of a small walled city; in the distance are the majestic heights of Mount Tabor, which add grandeur to the scene; approach with our blessed Lord, and behold, as they draw near to the city, the gates are thrown open, and a funeral procession slowly and solemnly issues forth; one figure, bending low in the depth of its affliction, walks by the bier; our blessed Lord, Who fears no pollution from the dead, which fear keeps back His followers, draws near and looks upon that mourner, who in the agony of her desolation hangs over all that remains of her last earthly hope. Approach, my soul, and gaze upon the dead; cast aside, for a time, all other thoughts, and meditate upon death; such an exercise is very profitable, for thou must one day die, and lie stretched on a bier like that young man.

Look upon that body, lately instinct with life and motion, now stretched to an unnatural length, pale, livid, pinched in feature, stiff and frightful. Oh! if death makes such a sudden and loathsome change in the young and the beautiful, let me not attach myself to this perishing world, but consecrate myself to the love and service of that blessed Master Who never dies.

Let me consider that a person no sooner dies than the body begins to change and to corrupt, and shortly becomes insupportably offensive. Those who were

most fondly attached to the living are anxious to put away their dead out of their sight. Six feet of earth contain all that was so loved and so loving, so prized and so admired ; and if the grave were to be opened and the remains visited after a few days, what a sight of corruption would be there ! O why do I not remember what my composition is, and what I am quickly to come to ? O dust and corruption, why wilt thou be proud ?

But what am I to gather from these meditations ? Even that I must make very small account of the beauty of the body, or of any thing that death can take away. Let me turn my thoughts to my better part, by laying up immortal riches for my immortal soul, and procuring such ornaments of Christian virtues for her as may be out of the reach of death. But let me ever, at the same time, remember that my body is a temple of the Holy Ghost ; and although I may not be vain or proud of it, let me never dare to profane it by the slightest impurity of thought or action, of look or word, for although it be sown in corruption, yet it shall be raised in incorruption ; though it be sown in dishonour, it will be raised in glory ; it is sown a natural body, it will be raised a spiritual body.

O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

Thanks be to God, Which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ !



Friday after Sixteenth Sunday.

And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

St. Luke, vii. 13.

BLESSED be Thy Name, O Holy Spirit of God, Who dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleasest, and workest all in all ! Be unto me a comforter in sorrow, a protector against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frailties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

How tender, how loving, is our blessed Lord ; He knew the desolate state of the widow ; her husband gone, her son gone, and she left alone ; and He had compassion on her. She spoke not, she could not contemplate the possibility of having her son restored to her ; but she, whose tears were her only entreaties, finds a Saviour ; Jesus meets her ; He touches the bier, and they who bare it stood still. " Young man, I say unto thee, arise." Our Lord here works as God ; He commands and it is done. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. He, the resurrection and the life, brought back, at His word of command only, evident signs of vitality, motion, and speech.

Let me first observe that in this miracle our blessed Lord sanctifies human sorrow. He saw the widow's deep affliction, and He censured her not, but had compassion on her, saying, Weep not ; as if He had said, cease to weep for one as dead, whom you shall soon see rise again alive. And herein let me ever take comfort, when in the course

of God's providence He sends affliction and bereavement to me. If I sorrow after a godly sort Christ will meet me, He will have compassion upon me, and although I cannot hope to see the dead raised to life, yet I shall have the blessed assurance that my dear ones rest in Him, and that when He has accomplished the number of His elect, they, and all the faithful departed, will have their perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in His eternal and everlasting glory. What will then be the short remaining time of life upon earth? I shall feel it only as a passage to eternal bliss. I shall be only as the widow passing on after the dead, and when out of the gate of the city of this life, I shall meet Jesus; a great company will be with Him; He will stop; and O the joys of what shall come after! They are what I cannot conceive, and what I am yet unworthy to think on.

O thou poor mourner, never be concerned for the afflictions of this life, if thou so walkest as to meet Christ when thou hast finished thy course. Walk therefore soberly, purely, and honestly; never swerve from the path in which thou art to meet thy Lord; and if thou cast thyself wholly upon His mercy, He will return thy soul unto thee again purified, washed, made clean, and thy weeping shall be turned into joy.

Even so come, Lord Jesus!



Saturday after Sixteenth Sunday.

God hath visited His people.—St. Luke, vii. 16.

BLESSED be Thy name, O Holy Spirit of God, Who dividest Thy gifts to every one as Thou pleassest, and workest all in all ! Be unto me a comforter in sorrow, a protector against sin, a guide in ignorance, a strengthener in all frailties, and a God to relieve all my wants. Be with me now, in this my meditation.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people ! The people at the gate of Nain had seen the dead raised unto life, and they saw in Him Who performed this miracle, God. I often see the miracle performed ; for whenever I see a humble and devout soul, being daily built up and strengthened in love and good works, in self-discipline and fervent prayer, I see in that person one who has been raised from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness ; and yet how little do I consider or give God thanks for having so visited us ! how poorly do I study and follow the daily walk of our blessed Lord while on earth ; how little fruit do I gather from the consideration of the fact of His incarnation ; how small account do I make of the poverty of His nativity, His lying in the manger, His obedience to the law of circumcision ; how little do I value the precious Name, Jesus. How do I pass over the passages of His infancy and youth, His desire of learning, His eagerness to inquire, His humility in obeying His parents. How little account do I make of His holy baptism, of the appearance therein of the Trinity, of His

fasting, His temptation, His want, in that He had not where to lay His Head, of His hunger and thirst, His weariness when He went about doing good, His watchings and continuance in prayer. How little do I endeavour to imitate His meek conversation Who endured such contradiction of sinners ; O how little have I profited by His patient endurance of insults, being called a Samaritan, a glutton, a demoniac, a deceiver, put below Barabbas ; how little have I profited by His sermons, conversations, intercessions, prayers, and the blessings conveyed by all the grace and loving-kindness of His miracles ; O how little have I brought before me the blessed reality of our dear Lord's having actually visited His people, and said, done, and suffered so much for me !

O my soul, endeavour by thy more diligent study of the Scriptures, to keep Jesus always with thee. He hath visited His people ; beseech Him to visit thee with true compunction for sins past, and hearty desires for serving Him better for the time to come.



Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness.

Ephesians, iv. 1, 2.



ELIVER me, O God, from every evil spirit, and vouchsafe to give me of Thine own good Spirit. Vouchsafe to give me the spirit of fortitude ; the spirit of temperance, and justice, and penitence ; the spirit of wisdom, and

understanding, and counsel ; the spirit of knowledge, and piety, and fear of Thee ; the spirit of peace, and patience, and benignity ; the spirit of humility, sobriety, and chastity. Shew me Thy narrow path, and support me therein by Thine own mighty arm, O Lord, my God, I humbly entreat Thee !

The vocation wherewith I am called is no other than that of being a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. This is a glorious calling ! a high and holy vocation ! A member of Christ, one belonging to my dear Saviour, one of His own. A child of God ! what ! really a child of the Most High God ? of the High and Holy One Who inhabiteth eternity ? Can I be so near in relationship to Christ ? Yea, He does indeed condescend to be my elder Brother, and He will bring me to the foot of His Father's throne, and will give me a mansion in the heavens prepared for me from all eternity, if I walk worthily of this my vocation.

But who is this prisoner of the Lord, who thus recommends lowliness and meekness, as becoming the vocation of Christians ? It is St. Paul ; he, who in the commencement of his career, had persecuted the Church. At his feet the young men who stoned Stephen laid down their clothes, and yet he recommends meekness ; he made havoc of the Church and entered into the houses of the Christians, and committed the men and women to prison, yet he recommends meekness ; he continued breathing out threatenings and slaughter, yet he recommends lowliness. The fierce nature of Paul shewed itself in these persecutions, before the Lord converted him unto Himself. Then behold what a change ! Instead of threatenings, and persecutions,

and anger, and fierceness, we find him recommending meekness and lowliness, long-suffering and forbearance ! A similar change must be wrought in every heart before it can walk worthy of the high vocation of a Christian. Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ? The Holy Spirit answers, Walk worthy of thy vocation, in meekness and lowliness ; follow the steps of the holy Jesus ; He was meek and lowly of heart ; follow Him in the holy way of the Cross ; turn from no suffering because it is irksome to the body, and never shrink from being despised of men because of thy vocation ; it is better to suffer here a little while in shame and sorrow, than to have an eternity of suffering hereafter. Take up thy cross, therefore, and follow Jesus. Let the recollection of His bitter pangs reconcile thee to the little thou wilt have to undergo before thou wilt have run thy race and finished thy course.

And oh, entreat the Lord to give thee His grace, that thou mayest have strength to walk worthily of that high calling, wherein thou hast a Saviour to intercede for thee, a comforter to strengthen thee, and a hope laid up for thee, that thou mayest finally enter into an eternity of bliss. O God, my Saviour, I am called by Thy Name, I am a child of Thy grace, a sharer of the Covenant, an heir of Thy kingdom. Grant me to walk worthily of this high vocation ; cast down and utterly abolish in me the whole body of sin, and so build me up in Thy grace that I may continue Thine for ever. O Lord, hear my prayer, and hearken unto my petition. Thou that despisest not the sighings of the contrite heart, come unto me, and help me, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest for ever and ever.

Monday after Seventeenth Sunday.

With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.—Ephesians, iv. 2.

LORD, I pray Thee that Thy grace may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The vocation wherewith I am called obliges me not only to walk humbly with my God, but also to take heed unto my conduct as regards my neighbour. I am set in the midst of many and great dangers. I cannot always stand upright. Meekness and lowliness must not degenerate into apathy and sluggishness, and long-suffering and forbearance must not exclude the necessity, which sometimes arises, of reproof and rebuking open and positive misconduct. How far any private individual has a right to comment upon the conduct of others, or to censure it, may be a difficult point to determine, but I see clearly that meekness and lowliness ought to prevent my doing so, on any private or personal grounds. In my intercourse with my neighbour, I must put self out of sight as much as possible, and I must never resent or feel hurt at the slights and rudeness of others. Let me ever remember this in the daily round of domestic intercourse, and let long-suffering and forbearance mark every action. At the same time a parent may not pass over the disrespect of a child; he must not think of the insult to himself, but he must punish in his child the breach of God's law. The master may not disre-

gard the insolence of a servant ; with all meekness in his heart, and with all forbearance, he must administer suitable admonition, and he must point out the breach of God's law.

O how different a place would this world be, if we all acted with meekness and lowliness in all long-suffering and forbearance ! Let me resolve from henceforth more earnestly to cultivate the Christian graces, and to carry out the practice into my daily, hourly life and conversation.

At present, how sadly deficient am I in these respects ! When the smallest thing goes contrary to my wishes, how do I repine ; how ready am I to blame others, how easily provoked by their censure ! O how poorly do I imitate the saints and martyrs of old, whose sufferings were borne with joy, whose glory was when they were most despised ! Persecuted on all sides, they blessed their God that they were counted worthy of such sufferings, and their only concern was for their enemies' sins. O how I condemn my impatience, and bless Thy good providence, O my God, for putting me in the way to heaven. O grant me perseverance, that I may walk on, guided by Thy good Spirit, in meekness and lowliness, in long-suffering and forbearance. I beseech Thy goodness, O Lord, to fortify my weakness, and to put into me such courage, that I may count it a matter of rejoicing, if I have to suffer shame for Thy most holy and blessed Name.



Tuesday after Seventeenth Sunday.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.—Ephesians, iv. 3.

LORD, I pray Thee that Thy grace may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The vocation wherewith I am called is not an isolated and an individual duty, or set of duties, but Holy Scripture is always setting before me that I am in a social position, my duties lie with all the members of Christ, the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. In our unity of membership we are likened to the human body. Each member sympathises and co-operates with the other, and to each God has entrusted some office to be used to His glory, and for the benefit of the body, so that the whole is full of action, life and energy; the whole grows together towards perfection, strengthened by the ministration of the Holy Spirit, and all is harmony, order, and perfect combination. Placed in this glorious society, how well ought I to watch my conduct towards my fellow members, walking orderly and soberly, seeking to benefit, as much as lies in my power, each individual, in all lowliness and humility; avoiding giving offence, and seeing in each, a fellow worker, together with Him our glorious Head, Whose ascension on high has secured such good gifts for men.

Now, let me remember to make this doctrine of Christ's Church on earth a living and abiding reality in me; an excitement to extra exertion, to working for the good of others, to attaining more personal holiness, and to increasing my love and the fervour of my devotion towards God.

I believe in the holy Catholic Church; I am one of that communion; let me be very tender, very loving, towards others, my fellow members; let me work for their good, let me esteem them all before myself, and let me pay minute attention to all my social duties, so that I may be a living member of this holy Body. [*Here mention particular circumstances of social duties, whether as father, son, master, servant, rich, or poor.*] And let me be always active in educating the young, that they may grow up living members, and also in lending my assistance in building up and strengthening those whose opportunities and means of improvement are small and few.

I believe in the holy Catholic Church; let me endeavour to purify myself from all evil passions, all imperfections, all defects of temper, and let me put on the whole armour of God, that I may, as a member of the Body, fight in the same great cause against sin, the world, and the devil; let me be constant in prayer for grace, for strength, for love; let me beg of God to bring me nearer to Himself, that I be no longer the unloving, cold, hard, creature that I have been; but, above all, let me frequent the house of God, where He more especially is present, where the Church sends up her petitions in words that have been used by saints and martyrs, and by the whole body of the Church for ages past. There, in the temple of the Lord, fallen low before His footstool, I am joined with the whole body of Christ's Church Militant here upon earth, in con-

Wednesday after Seventeenth Sunday. 327

fessing our manifold sins and wickednesses, in beseeching Him to grant to His faithful people pardon and peace, and in joining with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven in praising and lauding His glorious Name. In this manner, drawing near, each to the other, all to God, I earnestly believe that I shall grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus ; and in all humility I beseech Him, my most merciful Father, to grant, that walking in the vocation wherewith I am called, I may do so in lowliness and meekness, in all long-suffering and forbearance, and that I may keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.



Wednesday after Seventeenth Sunday.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

Ephesians, iv. 5.



LORD, I pray Thee that Thy grace may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Having yesterday considered the Body of Christ, kept together in the unity of the Spirit ; many, as to the number of its members, but one as to the Spirit ; let me to-day meditate upon the great Head of this Body, even Christ Himself, our only Lord, into Whose hand God the Father has committed all power, and all judgment, and Who now sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

He, our Lord, sitteth in His body in glory in heaven, in the place of honour and of power.

There, in the ineffable glories of that blest place, He sits in the very body in which He purchased the redemption of His members upon earth. I may meditate with devoutest reverence upon our dear Lord; there is comfort to the penitent to think that the glorious Head, now encircled with brightness and light ineffable, which was once crowned with a painful garland of thorns, is ever turned to the Father in intercession. The eyes which looked with rebuking pity on Peter, now look towards Him Who pardons transgression. The pierced hands, those precious wounds still remaining, are lifted in intercessions. But I may overpass the bounds of reverent awe in giving words to these meditations. I will desist, and will devoutly adore, where I might ignorantly transgress.

Our Lord is ever making intercession for His body on earth. It is dear to Him, He purchased it with His most precious blood, He watches over it with tender care, and sends down light to shew it His ways and direct it in His paths. He, Light of light, sends the light of His Holy Spirit to lead it on through the gloom of this world and of the valley of the shadow of death; and He sends down food, He gives Himself to His faithful and penitent members, to give them strength and courage for their journey. This is a great mystery, but the Holy Spirit reveals it, and we humbly and thankfully receive it. The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many, are one body, and are all partakers of that one bread. O, what a privilege! what an honour to be thus joined with our Lord in this close and mystical union! How does our oneness of faith and our common baptism unite

us in heavenly bonds each with the other, and all to that great and glorious Head Who, as He is God, is so immeasurably distant from us, but Who, as Man, has vouchsafed to be so interwoven and intertwined with us !

Let me pause here and humbly adore the immensity of that love which has done such great, such unspeakable things for us ; may every knee bow low at His exalted Name, and every tongue confess His glory. When, O Thou Finisher of our hopes, shall we behold Thy incomparable light ; that light which is Thy very self, O our God, Whom we shall then see face to face ? O Lord unite us speedily unto Thee, and in the meanwhile, O gracious Lord, the crown of all Thy saints, and only expectation of Thy faithful servants, make us entertain our life with the comfort of this hope, and our hope with the assurance of Thy promises. Make us every day more perfectly understand our own great duties and Thy infinite love. “ Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all His benefits !” *Amen.*



Thursday after Seventeenth Sunday.

One Lord.—Ephesians, iv. 5.

LORD, I pray Thee that Thy grace may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let me remember that the Church, the body of Christ, consisting of those joined together in one faith by one baptism, has endured for ages ; many

saints and servants of the Lord who once belonged to the visible body of Christ on earth, are now passed out of sight ; a part of the body is ever being built up silently and steadily in the unseen world, and is laid up until the great day when purged and purified from all dross, and from the corruption contracted in the world, it will be joined with its great Head. They shall look on Him face to face ; they shall see Him as He is ; they shall be made like unto Him. Here is a comfort to lay to the wounded heart of the bereaved on earth. The loved one has passed out of sight, but if he be a lively stone he will be added to the building going on in heaven ; one by one the members of the earthly body pass away, they are added to the heavenly body, and when the building is complete, then will be the end !

We have also communion with members of the body departed long since ; we knew them not in the body, but they held the same faith, read the same Holy Book, received the same sacraments, fought the same enemy under the same banner, had like afflictions, with like consolations, similar trials and similar deliverances ; are we not perfectly joined together ? do we not walk as it were hand in hand, though one hand is put down from on high, and the other is raised aloft ? Yes, it is elevating to think of our communion with saints departed ; may we walk worthy of being their fellow members !

But in order to have communion with any, we must know them ; the more intimately we are acquainted with an absent friend, the more we can be with him in spirit ; we see, as it were, all he is doing, we know of what he is thinking. We wish to have communion with Christ our head ; we wish to realize to ourselves His presence in His Church, and His intercession for it. We must make ourselves

more acquainted with Him. His bodily presence in heaven leads us to feel that by studying all that befell Him during His bodily presence on earth, we shall draw ourselves up to Him, and become more conformed to His image.

Let me resolve from henceforth minutely to study all the life of our blessed Lord, as set forth in the gospels; let me strive to become, as it were, acquainted with Him; let me kneel by Him in the manger, and seek Him in the temple; let me stand by the river Jordan during His baptism, and follow Him into the wilderness; let me treasure up the words which fell from His lips in His divine discourses, in His parables; let me stand with the multitudes beholding His miracles, and accompany Him with Peter, James, and John, to the mount of transfiguration; let me stand by and see His tender love for His own, in the tears shed over Jerusalem; let me be with Him in the upper room, and see Him instituting that precious mystery of His Body and Blood; let me go over every word of His trial with devout reverence, and follow Him bearing the cross, and hear His last words, and receive His bitter cry, and fall down at the foot of the cross, crying, My Lord and my God!



Friday after Seventeenth Sunday.

And it came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.—St. Luke, xiv. 1.

LORD, I pray Thee that Thy grace may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good works through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Although our Lord knew of the malice of the Pharisees, yet He became their guest, that He might by His words and miracles benefit those who were present.

The Lord of life entered the guest-chamber, and they watched Him; not to profit by His gracious words; not to treasure up His behaviour as a pattern which was to serve them hereafter; but to see whether He acted in all points according to their preconceived notions of right and wrong; whether He would do in all things as did the Jews. They, with their eyes blinded by unbelief, saw not the God standing before them; they "held all together and kept themselves close; and marked His steps that they might lay wait for His soul." O what great irreverence, what awful blindness was this! I can imagine men looking up to the Lord; hanging upon all His words, and with adoring love looking at and treasuring up all His actions, so as to enable them to bring the picture of our dearest Master before their mind, when His bodily presence is taken away; but to watch Him with fierce eyes, and scowling brows, and to have scornful thoughts, and hatred in the heart against Him! it is too dreadful to think on; O may neither I, nor any with whom I have to do, be guilty of this dreadful sin.

Watchfulness is a Christian duty; I must watch our blessed Saviour in all His words and works, as shewn forth in the gospels; I must watch unto prayer; I must watch my own heart, to detect in it all the beginnings of sin, in order to extirpate them; I must live in a constant state of watchfulness, going with Christ into the banquet-hall, watching Him in all His words, in all His works; in His members; in the indications of God's providence; but I must not do so in the spirit of the Pharisees. I must put

on the Spirit of Jesus, Who has said, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." In a spirit of humility and lowliness, therefore, must I watch; I must become as a little child, and in all simplicity watch the movements of my great Teacher; and I must act in the same spirit as respects my neighbour, "bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things."

But it is possible that I may watch in a wrong sense; I may have retired into myself, and formed for myself such a narrow and strict code of behaviour, that when I go abroad I may watch to see whether all persons act up to my notions of what Christians ought to do; and if they do not exactly according to my model, I may think ill of them. In such a case as this, should I be acting as one of the members of our great Head ought to act? No! I must judge no man; enough have I to do in keeping up myself to the degree of watchfulness requisite for my high calling. I cannot judge of the spiritual constitution, or the difficulties, or the drawbacks of others; I cannot see their hearts, and I must therefore never "watch" my brethren in order to censuring or condemning them. Let me rather look at my own heart, and see there the need of vigilance and watchfulness, and then let me beg of my gracious Saviour grace to follow Him, if only afar off, and by watching His gracious steps endeavour to order my goings in His paths.



Saturday after Seventeenth Sunday.

Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?—St. Luke, xiv. 5.

LORD, I pray Thee that Thy grace may alway prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Pharisees watched our blessed Lord when he cured the dropsical man as if He had done something contrary to the law; but He knew their hearts, and rebuked them by asking the question whether they would refrain from assisting even a brute creature, if it were for their own advantage, on the sabbath day. They held their peace, ashamed of their inconsistency. In the beginning, when God created all things, He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; how particularly, then, is it to be a day given up to good works. If my neighbour should stand in need of assistance I may not refuse it on the sabbath day, though I may not seek to benefit myself temporally on a day specially sanctified and set apart for the improvement of the soul, and for forwarding the growth of grace therein. The sabbath is, to us, a type of that everlasting rest in the heavenly kingdom where there shall be no more care and grief, and where sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

But the sabbath day is more still unto us, under the gospel; it is no longer on the seventh day, but on the first day of the week; we give unto God

the first of our days, because on it He ordained that Christ our Saviour should finish the work of our redemption and rise from the dead ; on it the apostles, from the time of that glorious resurrection, always met together for the purposes of public worship, and prayer and praise, and so have handed down the custom to us, further sanctified as it has been by the descent of the Holy Ghost on this blessed first day of the week. What a day of high thoughts and holy aspirations ought the Christian sabbath to be ! every hour of it sanctified by sacred recollections, from the first grey dawn in the morning until the eventide, when if we have spent a holy and profitable day, in recollection of our own wants, and of our Saviour's mercies, and, in great love to all men, we may beg of Him, our blessed Saviour, to continue "to abide with us," for we have walked on our course until the days of our life are far spent, and the night is at hand ; we have therefore great need of His gracious help, for without Him we can do nothing.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the privileges and blessings of this day of sacred rest ; and be not content to barely thank Him in words, but shew forth thy praise by doing His Will on His holy day ; be constant in His holy temple, and give all those, over whom thou hast power, or those whom thou canst influence, the opportunity of attending likewise ; give thyself up to the concerns of thy soul, or to spiritual works of mercy during the intervals of public worship ; and if thou hast the privilege of joining in those high and holy mysteries which convey grace and strength to thee, seek in them that more perfect union with thy Saviour, and beg of Him to abide with thee, and not to leave thee nor forsake thee ; then, when the sacred day is past,

thou wilt return to thy labours with renewed strength, to bear what the Lord shall see fit, to prepare thee for that eternal sabbath, when "God will dwell with His people, and shall be with them and be their God."

I WAS glad when they said unto me : We will go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city : that is at unity in itself.

For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord : to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

For there is the seat of judgment : even the seat of the house of David.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls : and plenteousness within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sake : I will wish thee prosperity.

Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God : I will seek to do thee good.



Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians, i. 4.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts on my duties, and that I may serve Thee now and always both in heart and mind.

Let me first consider that in this passage, St. Paul gives me a model of true piety, which consists not only in returning our God and Father continual thanks for the grace and favours He bestows upon ourselves, but also for those that He imparts to others.

Let me next consider how far I am from practically acknowledging, and returning thanks, for the graces bestowed upon others, and even, how backward I am in thankfulness for those which are fallen to my share.

My whole life has been a continual train of favours, every moment is marked by some fresh instance of God's mercy ; and yet for so many mercies, have I often seriously *felt* gratitude and returned thanks ? As every moment is signalized by some favour, so ought every moment to be consecrated to acts of gratitude. But I have sinned in forgetting those mercies ; I have sinned in the midst of these mercies ; and if God continues to pour His benefits upon me, I owe them to His bounty, and not to my deserts.

In my intercourse with others, how little do I notice their spiritual growth ; their increase of grace, their blessings, in order to thank God for them ! I know (in part) what it took to redeem their souls ; I know they are precious in the sight of God, and yet how little interest do I take in their spiritual concerns, in comparison with their temporal ones ? O when shall I get to look at each of my brethren as an immortal soul, treading the same path as I am ? When shall I look with the same interest upon the spiritual career of each individual, as persons do upon a race, where the manner of running shews from the beginning who is likely first to attain the goal ?

But let me consider that under the circumstances in which I am placed, I cannot move from my dwelling, without meeting crowds of persons, each bearing the impress of the Royal image, though in some the mark may be nearly worn away. Each of these persons has a soul to be saved, an immortal soul ; in some it is but too plain to be seen, that that soul is fast going towards perdition ; there are great varieties of appearance, from the most degraded to the high-spirited, well-clad, well-fed rich man, who is going about seeking amusement, rather than business. There is the busy trader, and the listless idler ; the gay youth, and the crushed and depressed mendicant ; there is the rich old man, full of infirmities, riding in his chariot, and the sturdy mechanic, full of health and vigour, going about his hard daily labour ; all these and many others, of different grades and characters, I daily pass ; they have all souls, but I cannot give thanks for the growth of grace in them, I know nothing of them ; but I have a powerful weapon, to wield in behalf of those who care not to fight for themselves. I can assist the efforts of others ; I can pray for them ; this must be an especial duty to all who live in great towns, to pray for those who live around them ; to penetrate as it were with the arm of prayer into the dense mass of sin and misery around us ; to be spiritually with the poor and afflicted, the destitute, the dying, in all their struggles.

O my God, I will pray and that instantly, and Thou wilt hear my voice. I will pray Thee to strengthen the feeble knees, and to lift up the hands that hang down ; I will pray Thee to convert the unconverted, to defend the fatherless and widow, and to see that those who are in need and necessity have right. And, O my God, I *can* thank Thee

that Thou hast sent out Thy light and truth, and that there is a chosen band, being built up surely and steadily, though silently, of whom I may, in gratitude for their example, and in admiration of Thy goodness manifested in them, say with St. Paul : "I thank God always in your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus."



Monday after Eighteenth Sunday.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.—St. Matthew, xxii. 37.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts on my duties, and that I may serve Thee now and always, both in heart and mind.

How am I to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil? It is a great, a solemn question, and one which I desire to answer candidly, and to examine honestly, so that no vain illusions, no deceits from my own heart may blind me, as the lawyer was blinded when he asked Jesus which was the great commandment in the law.

O my God, may I never tempt Thee by asking questions in a captious and perverse spirit; may I receive Thy precepts as a little child, in all simplicity, and endeavour to walk on by the kindly light of Thy blessed Spirit.

To withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, I must follow the only God with a pure heart and mind. The love of God must

occupy me, heart, soul, and mind, and then will He quicken me with His Holy Spirit, and give me power to have victory and to fight against my spiritual foes.

To love God with all the heart, is to seek Him, to cleave to Him, and rest in Him alone, for His own sake; and to seek, cleave unto and take pleasure in nothing, but only so far as it is conformable to His Will, as it may be referred to His glory or be useful to my own salvation, to that of my neighbour, or to the good of the Church.

There should be no thoughts or designs in the mind; no desires or motives in the will; no business or actions in the life, but what have the love of God for the first cause, His law for their rule, and His glory for their end. O how poorly have I obeyed this first and greatest commandment! I desire to fulfil it better for the time to come; I know how great and how good God is; why, O why does not my whole self cling to Him and adore Him; and why am I not more entirely filled with Him, and satisfied by His heavenly pleasures! Is it not also a higher inducement to love God, that my dearest Saviour, He, Who having satisfied divine justice is continually pleading for divine mercy, says unto me, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." Thou hast said it, gracious Saviour; behold my heart, I am willing, ready to obey; but I am weak, I cannot raise myself high enough to love God as He ought to be loved; raise me by Thy Spirit, quicken me by Thy grace, give me clean hands and a pure heart, and then let me see and know Thee in all Thy works; may I always have before my eyes the worship I owe to my God; and may I consecrate the days of my pilgrimage to His love and service. *Amen.*

Tuesday after Eighteenth Sunday.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.

St. Matthew, xxii. 37.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts on my duties, and that I may serve Thee now and always, both in heart and mind.

Let me consider that the first sacrifice which divine love calls for by this first and greatest commandment, is that of the heart. My son, give me thy heart, says Holy Scripture, and this sacrifice must be of the whole heart,—“a whole burnt offering” unto the Lord. This sacrifice must first be slain, that is, must die to itself, and to all its disorderly affections, by mortification and self-denial; and so be laid upon God’s altar, to be wholly dedicated and given up to Him.

How just, how reasonable, how necessary is it, that I should love God with all my heart! so as to give no part of it away from Him, to Whom it belongs by every possible title.

He made my heart for Himself, to be the eternal seat and living temple of His love, and He has implanted in it a certain longing after Him, together with a capability of loving which nothing less than God can fill or satisfy.

He has given His only-begotten Son to shed His most precious Blood to purchase my heart, and to cleanse it for Himself, and to fill it with His love. It has been solemnly dedicated, sanctified, and consecrated to Him at Baptism; He has sent His Holy

Spirit to take possession of it, to make it a holy temple unto Himself. O how can I try to alienate from God, what belongs to Him on so many and just titles. Let me give Him what is His without reserve, it would be sacrilege to divert any part of this small heart from the great Lord of heaven and earth.

But God will not admit a divided heart; He will not suffer a rival in His kingdom, a partner on His throne, an idol in His temple. Our God is a jealous God, and therefore if I give myself to other love, I shall lose His, and drive Him from me. What wouldst thou, O my soul, associate with God in thy heart? is it worldly pride? or earthly affections? or a little secret sin? or an evil habit? or is it some earthly darling that thou canst not dislodge from thy heart? Thou must nevertheless do so; the place is all too narrow for two guests; thou must either part with the creature, or the Creator. Be assured that thou lovest God too little, if thou love anything with Him, that thou lovest not *in* Him, for His sake, and in subordination to Him.

O Lord, grant that I may love my friend in Thee, and my enemy (if I have any), for Thy sake. O let no love of creatures occupy my heart, but let it be wholly and entirely Thine.



Wednesday after Eighteenth Sunday.

With all thy soul.—St. Matthew, xxii. 37.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts on my duties, and that I may serve Thee now and always, both in heart and mind.

Let me remember that I am not only to love God with my whole heart, that is, with all my affections, but also with my whole soul, that is, by applying all the powers of my soul to the love and in the service of Him Who made it after His image. Bring, then, my soul, bring all thy powers to God, and oblige them all to bow down to this divine law of love, and ardently to embrace its happy service, which will ennoble and elevate them all. O let thy understanding be enlightened by the rays of its brightness into the ways of truth. The light of divine love will expel the dark mists raised by self-love, which so often overload thee, and cause thee to stray. Let every word, every action, every desire, be guided by this heavenly charity. O blessed kingdom of divine love, when wilt thou come to me, and take full possession of my soul? But I must remember that as the will is that ruling power of the soul which is the proper seat of divine love, so it is the will, amongst all the powers of the soul that ought, in a special manner, to be dedicated to divine love.

The will ever has good for the object of her love, so as not to be able to love or embrace anything, but under the form and appearance, at least, of good. God alone is the true and sovereign good, and He alone can satisfy the inbred appetite she has for good. For in all other pleasures or satisfactions there is dissatisfaction and emptiness, but in the love of God there is full and true happiness. Therefore, for His sake, and because He is infinitely good; as well for the soul's sake, and because He is the only true and sovereign good, it ought to be given up wholly and entirely to this heavenly love. O may my will make a constant sacrifice of all its liberty and property to the all-wise, the all-powerful, and ever-loving Will of God.

O my blessed Saviour, in contemplating this self-resignation, how does Thy divine example come before me ! Thou didst devote Thyself wholly to do Thy Father's will ; Thou hast said, "Lo ! I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, that I should fulfil Thy will, O my God : I am content to do it." Thy Father's will was the continual object of Thy love. Thou didst and saidst all in accordance with it, and at last Thou didst lay down Thy life for the love of it.

And, O my soul, thou comest into this world to do the will of Thy God ; to this end was existence given thee, art thou content to do it ? O take heed ; if thy will fall from this obedience to the will of God, and of His holy law, thy name will be blotted out of the book of life, and thou be cast out from the love of God.

Delay not, but dedicate thyself wholly to God ; make over thy will to Him, and desire to do nothing but in His service and to His glory.



Thursday after Eighteenth Sunday.

With all thy mind.—St. Matthew, xxii. 37.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts on my duties, and that I may serve Thee now and always, both in heart and mind.

My mind must also be consecrated to the love of God. The mind is the seat of thought, consideration, meditation, and recollection ; God must be the object of all these. Therefore to love God with all my mind. is to have my thoughts ever turned to-

wards Him, to consider Him, to meditate upon Him, upon His truth, His attributes, His glory, upon all that helps the soul to Him and brings me to His feet.

This love of the whole mind was required of all the servants of God under the old law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might; and these words shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in the house, and when thou walkest by the way; and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine head, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes."

See, my soul, how strongly God inculcates the perpetual remembrance of Him and His divine law, but more especially of the divine commandment of love, which is the fulfilling of the law. How reasonable and just it is that I should love God with all my mind, by ever remembering and thinking on Him. He always remembers and thinks on me, His eye is ever upon me, and shall I refuse Him the place He requires in my mind, or can I put Him off with less than the whole of it?

O may I never be so wretched, so ungrateful, so wicked, as to suffer any empty toy, any roving imagination, any worldly care, any vain amusement, to take the place in my mind which ought to be occupied by Him. I must be thinking all day; why, then, not occupy my thoughts with the noble, profitable, elevating, enlivening subject of our God, and of all that He has done for me.

O fix my thoughts with Thee, O God, take up my treasure with Thee into heaven, and where that is, there shall I, heart, soul, and mind, be also.

Friday after Eighteenth Sunday.

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,
and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

St. Matthew, xxii. 37.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts on my duties, and that I may serve Thee now and always, both in heart and mind.

One of the great objects to be aimed at, when in any degree I have attained the love of God, is to maintain a constant sense of His Presence. I know that God is everywhere, I acknowledge that I cannot flee from His Presence, that if I ascend up to heaven He is there, if I go down to hell, He is there also ; if I take the wings of the morning and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also His hand shall lead me and His right hand shall hold me ; yet I never so perfectly realize the Divine Presence as to feel penetrated with the sense of it ; in fact, as I review my past life, I fear that I have lived almost in practical unbelief of it. As I seek to increase in love to God, so must my sense of His presence increase upon me. As I am to love my God with all my heart and with all my mind, so must the exercise of His Presence be performed, partly by the understanding, and partly by the will ; for as the blessed in heaven are eternally employed about God, partly by the contemplation of His infinite perfections, and by the vision of His ineffable glory, which belongs to the understanding ;

and partly by love and fruition, which belong to the will, so that they are eternally happy in the enjoyment of this sovereign good, and eternally united both by will and understanding to the Source of all happiness ; so I, and all His servants here on earth, ought to apply our souls in both these ways to God, so that He, and love to Him, may be the sole, engrossing, and occupying employment of heart, soul, and mind, as is intimated by our blessed Lord, when He uses the word *all*. And this is effected by the exercise of the Divine Presence, which employs the understanding in the thought and remembrance of Him, by means of a lively faith, and sense of His being always with us and within us ; and entertains the heart and affections with Him, by continually turning it towards Him, by aspirations of love, by oblations of our whole selves to Him ; and by longing desires for perfect union with Him.

In order to learn and to practise this heavenly exercise of the presence of God, I must entirely put away dissipation of mind ; too much carefulness for the things of this world ; and undue affection for any creatures ; if any of these things carry away the mind, God will be forgotten. I must then banish dissipation of thought by continual recollection ; I must overcome worldly solicitude, by faith and confidence in God, and by conformity to His will ; and I must correct excess of earthly affection, by turning from the creature to God.

O my soul, strive always to be with Him, Who is always with thee ; walk as in His sight, making a conscience of thy ways ; and let thy moderation be known unto all men, "seeing that the Lord is at hand." Then count thyself as most happy and most favoured when, alone with thy God, thou feelest

Holy Ghost, and pour into my heart that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. O let my love to my neighbour be as that of myself, let nothing provoke me to hate or despise him, but from his infirmities and defects let me more clearly see into my own, and consider that I am liable to and partaker of, the same human frailty.

O give me this most excellent gift, I beseech Thee, for His sake, Who was the very pattern and example of all charity, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.



Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

Ephesians, iv. 18.



LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

St. Paul warns his Ephesian converts not to do as other Gentiles, who being puffed up by vanity, rely not on the Holy Spirit for guidance, and are therefore punished by having their understandings darkened, so that they are separated from the life of God, through ignorance, and thence they are afflicted with blindness of heart.

Let me consider whether I am in danger of falling into this dreadful error ; it begins in vanity ; in relying on self ; in not putting the whole trust in God ; in not praying for His Holy Spirit to direct and rule the heart.

When once in this state, we go on to having the understanding darkened so that we walk on without direction, without guide ; the heart becomes blind, we see none of the things belonging to the Spirit ; God is hidden from us, we know not Jesus, we are strangers to the covenant and promises ; we finally become alienated from God, we are put away from Him, we are His children no longer ; having forfeited His promises, and sinned away His grace, we are going down to perdition. O may God in His great mercy keep me from so dreadful a state ! May I walk before Him humbly ; trusting nothing to myself or to my own judgment, but submitting myself to His guidance in all things.

Let me now consider how to avoid falling into the wretchedness of a life alienated from God. To keep off vanity, let me seek to know myself by daily self-examination ; and if I catch myself indulging in any vain feelings or imaginations, let me cast over in my mind, my faults, my infirmities ; let me imagine myself telling out aloud my vain thoughts, and then I shall perceive, how worthy of shame they are.

But this is not enough. I am not sufficient of myself to do anything as of myself ; I must seek assistance from God in prayer ; I must call upon Him humbly and earnestly ; I must seek the grace of His blessed Spirit to assist my humble endeavours ; I must beseech His aid in enlightening my mind to read the Holy Scripture to my profit ; I must seek closer union with my Saviour in the blessed sacrament of His Body and Blood ; and as,

the more I know, the more I shall bewail my ignorance, the more I shall feel myself to be poor and miserable, and blind and naked ; the more earnestly I shall seek unto my God to clothe me with the robe of righteousness, and I shall walk daily closer to my God, feeling that in all other ways there is nothing but ignorance and blindness and darkness.

O my God, my All ! let me, I beseech Thee, live close to Thee ; let me rely on Thee solely and entirely, to lead me in the way wherein I should go ; without Thee I am not able to please Thee, give me Thy Holy Spirit to guide me, and to direct my heart in all things to obey Thy blessed will ; through my holy Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ.



Monday after Nineteenth Sunday.

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Ephesians, iv. 24.



LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

How have I learned Christ ? Let me ask myself this question, for if I practically know the truth as it is in Jesus, a great change is to be wrought in me, and indeed, is continually going on in me. I came into the world a sinful creature, the taint of Adam's transgression infected me, and I was altogether cor-

rupt, having no power to do anything good. By Baptism the good seed of the Spirit was planted in me, but, like other seed, if it had not been cultivated, and watered and tended, it would have brought forth no fruit, and I should have gone on, being continually strengthened in my original corruption. But blessed be God, I was born the child of careful parents, and in a happy land, where the glorious truth as it is in Jesus, is proclaimed on all sides.

I remember the trouble that it took when in childhood my will had to be subdued, my habits had to be formed, my passions had to be quelled; the spirit of lying had to be quenched. O how tenaciously did the old man adhere to me! how hard was it to subdue the old self which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. All this went on without my will, and I knew not that the beginning of a great work had commenced in my soul. I came to years of discretion and gradually as the light dawned upon me, I saw what I *was*, what I *ought* to be; the wonders of redemption flashed a bright light into my soul, and I saw that I was naked; unclothed in part, of the old robe, the filthy garment of my corrupt nature, but the robe of righteousness not put on. Thanks to my training, I knew how to proceed in this great work; still the old man struggled to retain the filthy rags, and the robe of righteousness hung as it were out of my reach; and now how does it fare with me? the contest is going on, the old self is not entirely put under, and I have to keep a constant guard, lest it should even now get the upper hand; when I am angry, the old man prompts me to give way to the passion, but the new man points to the meek and lowly One, and I know that I must struggle against it. The

old man recommends revenge, the new man says, that if mine enemy trespass against me seventy times seven, I must forgive him. Lying is of the old man, but the new man must speak the truth with his neighbour; indulgence of the senses is allowed by the old man, but "deny thyself" is the motto of the new man.

O my soul, thou art come to a sense of what thou hast to do. If the will is brought into subjection all will go well, and God will accept thee according to what thou hast, and not according to what thou hast not; follow thy Saviour and beseech Him to clothe thee with His righteousness; give thyself up to Him in all holy fear and obedience, and thou wilt see that as thy evil inclinations one by one decrease, thy love for holiness and true righteousness, thy adoration of thy Saviour, will increase, thou wilt long to be more perfectly united with Him, to have done with the troublesome warfare between the old and new man, and to enter into that rest where, clothed with white raiment, the saints are evermore rejoicing round the throne of the glorious Majesty on high.



Tuesday after Nineteenth Sunday.

Be ye angry, and sin not.—Ephesians, iv. 26.



LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

It does not necessarily follow that when I am

angry I commit sin ; our blessed Lord and Saviour when He healed the man with the withered hand on the sabbath-day, looked on those who found fault with Him "with anger," yet He was without sin. Anger is justly kindled against those who sin against the laws of God or of man ; it becomes sinful when it begets a desire of revenge, and would inflict punishment from private and personal feelings ; whereas just anger only seeks to punish the offender just so far as to amend him, or to vindicate the honour of God, or to assert the rights of man.

But anger is so subtle and dangerous a passion, that I must consider it in all ways, in order that I may increase my own abhorrence of it, and strengthen my endeavours to avoid it.

Let me consider that anger, passion, and desire of revenge deliberately indulged in, are contrary to the virtues especially enjoined by Jesus Christ, which are, meekness, humility, mercy, peace, long-suffering, self-renunciation, and bearing the cross. By these characteristics, I may know those who are true disciples of the meek and lowly Saviour. But how entirely at variance is anger with those virtues ! It destroys all meekness, and consequently humility, for anger generally springs from pride and self-love ; it has no mercy, and is indeed a short madness, capable, while it lasts, of inflicting any mischief ; it breaks peace with God and with our neighbour. O my soul, how canst thou sufficiently detest, and effectually drive from thee a vice which separates thee from God ; quenches His blessed Spirit ; does much injury to thy neighbour, and would place thee in direct opposition to thy Saviour, thy Master, and thy Lord.

In order to subdue this dreadful passion, and to keep it within the bounds prescribed by the law, I

must watch, I must fight, I must pray against it. I must watch the motions of the enemy, whose attacks are the most dangerous when they are sudden and unforeseen, therefore I must think beforehand, at the time of my self-examination, when I am most likely to meet with provocations or temptations; so that I may either decline and avoid them, or arm myself against them.

I must pray, earnestly and fervently, for victory (which God alone can give), over this passion. I must entreat God's blessing and the help of His Holy Spirit; I must place entire trust in God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, Whose meekness and humility are to be my constant pattern and study.

I must fight, and it will often be a tough battle, by resisting the enemy without delay, by exerting all the powers of the soul, the intensest efforts of the will, to still the storm as it arises; I may do so by repeating the clause of the Lord's Prayer, "Deliver us from evil;" by going from the company; or by keeping silence.

If thou canst subdue the enemy, thou hast gained a victory, O my soul; but if thou fallest, humble thyself to the dust, beseech forgiveness; thou hast committed a great sin; well is it for thee that thy merciful Saviour ever liveth to make intercession for thee.

O LORD, Who art a God ready to pardon, slow to anger and of great kindness, remove from me all occasions and effects of causeless and immoderate anger; all pride and prejudice, and too much concern for the things of the world; all intemperate speeches and indecent passions.

Give me, O God, a mild and peaceable, a meek

Wednesday after Nineteenth Sunday. 357

and an humble spirit, that remembering my own infirmities, I may bear with those of others ; that I may think lowly of myself, and not be angry when others think lowly of me ; that I may be patient towards all men, gentle and easy to be entreated, that God for Christ's sake may be so towards me. *Amen.*



Wednesday after Nineteenth Sunday.

Working with his hands the thing which is good.
Ephesians, iv. 28.



LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

St. Paul mentions working with the hands as a way of leading a holy life. He himself worked at a laborious trade that he might be burdensome to none, and he exhorts his followers to work with quietness, and to eat their own bread ; adding, "Be not weary in well doing."

The habit of my mind is to consider my work, or worldly business, as a hindrance to my spiritual advancement ; and I hear others speak as if they felt the same.

My work is () ; and those whose business it is to exercise hospitality to all sorts of persons, and to mix in the world, feel it a hindrance ; those who are employed in business find that a hindrance ; working in a factory is found a hindrance ; in fact

all worldly business is found to be full of hindrances to spiritual advancement. But besides these there are other things which we make hindrances. A child finds his obedience to his parents a hindrance ; servants find that dutiful service to their masters is a hindrance ; some even say that following the rules of the Church hinders their rise in spiritual religion. These things ought not so to be. I must be quite sure that if my duty, worldly, laborious, irksome, as it may be, is a hindrance to my soul, I am, in some way or another, in a grievous error ; there is something wrong within ; and the same I should say of any calling whatever, supposing, of course, that it is honest, and not contrary to God's known laws. My business is (), and I am aware that it necessarily engrosses most of my thoughts during the whole of the day. Let me consider how I can best dispose my time, that God's Holy Spirit may in this, as in all things else, direct and rule my heart.

I know the hour at which my work is to begin in the morning. I may rise so as to have time for a quiet, recollected consideration of what is before me ; I may think on what is likely to happen during the day, and endeavour to strengthen myself against the temptations likely to arise. Still I know not certainly what may befall me, and this uncertainty itself is very profitable to me, for it makes me throw myself entirely on God, hoping for His mercy, seeking His guidance, and the strength and support of His Spirit.

I can offer my morning sacrifice of prayer and supplication, making known my wishes and wants to God, shewing Him all my wounds, seeking unto Him for pardon and peace ; and I may conclude by saying, Behold me, O Lord, I am Thy servant

going forth to do my duty in that work to which Thou hast called me ; Thou knowest how fully it occupies me ; I desire, then, to offer it, as well as myself, unto Thee, beseeching Thee to guard what is Thine with Thy fatherly care ; keep me unblameable this day, O Lord, in thought, word, and deed ; and give me such recollection of spirit that at any moment which is free from work or care, I may lift up my soul in humble adoration of Thy infinite power and goodness.

If no other opportunity should offer during the day, I shall at least have a few moments before retiring at night ; a solemn half hour to remember the events of the day, to bewail sins past, and to pray against evil to come. This offering of the work of the hands to God will sanctify the busiest life ; for how diligent shall I be if I feel that my work belongs to no earthly master, but to my Heavenly Father, Whose mercy is over all His works !


O my soul, keep thyself in this spirit ; murmur not at thy worldly vocation, but determine to offer unto God of that which has cost thee pains and labour, and above all, the mortification of thy will.

O God of holiness and of purity, communicate to my soul as great a measure of holiness and purity as I am able to attain during the present life. Guide me into all the duties of a holy and religious life, and whatever Thou hast commanded me to do, which relates to Thy worship, or to my duty to my neighbour, give me grace to practise it constantly and punctually.

O that I might be holy as Thou art holy, pure as Thou art pure, and be found unblameable at the great day of the appearance of Thy Son Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Thursday after Nineteenth Sunday.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.—Ephesians, iv. 29.

 LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What a fruitful source of evil is the tongue ! I know this from sad experience, for I have many times been guilty both of using too many words, of saying what I ought not to say, and above all of saying what was not strictly in accordance with my thoughts.

Let me remember that I am always saying or doing something, which either benefits or injures my neighbour, or carries my soul nearer to heaven or to hell.

Let me remember that I am always in the presence of the Most High God ; ever moving onwards, either to reward or punishment ; in affairs of the soul there is no standing still ; I must be either going backwards or forwards.

Let me remember, that for every *idle* word, I shall have to give account before the judgment-seat of Christ. Recollecting all this, how sadly have I erred in my communications with others ; how very little have my thoughts been recollected in my conversations ; how entirely have I forgotten that I ought to speak that which will be good to the use of edifying. How has it been my wish to say what

would please or flatter those with whom I have conversed. How often have I used unreal words, words that have gone beyond my thoughts. How have I used light words in speaking of others. O may I never again hear, never repeat with pleasure such things as may dishonour God, hurt my own character, or injure my neighbour. May I always remember that I do good or harm to others by the manner of my conversation ; I either confirm them in sin, or awaken them to piety.

Let me then resolve from henceforth to set a guard upon my mouth, and to keep the door of my lips. Let me never be ashamed to speak of God and of His law. O may that good Spirit which appeared in the likeness of tongues of fire, warm my heart and direct my thoughts !

Grant, O God, that I may delight in Thy law, that my conversation may be truly Christian.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.

O Holy Spirit of grace, enable me to overcome the shame of a degenerate age, which will hear nothing with delight but what concerns this world. O touch my heart with the true love of God, the excellencies of His laws, the pleasantness of His service, and the wonders of His providences, that so, my heart being full of Him, my tongue may speak sweetly of His praises ; grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*



Friday after Nineteenth Sunday.

And Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.—St. Matthew, ix. 2.



D LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Again I am brought, in the course of the Church's instruction, to the contemplation of our Lord and Saviour, and of the mighty works which He wrought for the benefit of mankind.

I have seen Him, when coming down from the mountain, met by a leper whom he healed by putting forth His hand and touching Him, saying, "I will, be thou clean." I have seen Him healing the centurion's servant by His word; I have seen Him quelling the tempestuous sea, and asserting His power over the demons who confessed Him. Now He enters into a ship, and, passing over, comes into His own city. He Who could have crossed the sea on foot, enters a boat, for He would not be always working miracles; He graciously took upon Him our whole nature, and would suffer fatigue, and travel about as other men.

He enters His house, but they allow Him no rest, no suspension from fatigue; they bring to Him a man sick of the palsy; he was lying on a bed, and must have been borne of three or four other men.

Now let me here remark that the faith of the paralytic is not mentioned particularly, but it says,

“Jesus seeing *their* faith,” the faith of those who accompanied him, said unto the sick of the palsy, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.” The faith of his bearers not only brought health to the paralytic, but caused him to be called “son.” Even so we, when we are brought to Christ in Holy Baptism, and have our sins washed out, are made children of God by adoption and grace.

Here let me pause to consider the great value of faith, not only to the individual but to those among whom his lot is cast by the providence of God. I fear that my faith is used more as an individual benefit than as an instrument for the good of others. Is any one of my friends sick in body, do I bring him, as I ought to do, into Jesus’ presence by fervent prayer? Is any one distressed in mind, do I bear him unto the room where Jesus sits, and earnestly beseech the removal of his trial? Is any one living in sin, or do I know of the sin or infirmity of any; do I bring him to his Saviour, and beseech His compassion, and His saving grace, to loose the unfortunate sinner from his grievous bonds? I know that I am myself a weak and infirm mortal, tied and bound by the chains of my sins, but I believe that my Saviour has the power and the mercy to loose me, and therefore take courage to approach my gracious Master, and beseech Him not only for myself, but for all those whose wants and necessities are brought under my notice.

Lord, I believe; this is my constant declaration; “Help Thou my unbelief;” this my constant prayer; make my faith operative, lively, pervading my every act, my every thought; let it, O Lord, give a lively colour to all my actions in this life, and let it brighten the prospect of that eternal life which is promised to those who believe in Thee.

Saturday after Nineteenth Sunday.

Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house.

St. Matthew, ix. 6.



LORD God, be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation ; open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law, and send Thy Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

How gracious art Thou, O my Saviour, Thou commandest the sick in soul, those who are disabled by the infirmities of sin, to arise ; Thou givest them power to lift themselves from the bed of their former evil ways, and so to conquer their evil passions as to carry them, who before were carried of them ; Thou tellest them to go into their house, not the hospital from whence they came, but the home provided by Almighty God, even the safe resting-place of His will, there to await His final disposition of them in His everlasting kingdom ; blessed art Thou, O my Saviour, for Thy gracious encouragements to us to turn from evil ways ! It would seem impossible that any, so far gone in sin, as to be unable to stir hand or foot in their own behalf, should be so far recovered as to strive for themselves, for obedience and faith ; and yet this miracle shews that even *that* is possible ; and that our gracious Lord hears the prayers of others for their neighbours, sick in soul or in body, and that He gives them power to arise.

Behold the sinner awakened, convinced of his former evil ways, and anxious to do as his Saviour

bids him ; what are the commands ? He tells him to take up his mind from earthly thoughts and desires, and to carry them up to heaven ; He commands him to return into his house, to fix himself, mind and thoughts, where true joys are to be found ; and to take advantage of the peaceful calm of his home, to enter into rigid watchfulness, over his every thought, his every feeling, his desires, his actions, so that all may be brought into a fit state to pass to that heavenly house, whose Builder and Maker is God.

Go unto thine house ! O my soul, what a happy image does this present to thee ! From the crowded street, or the busy market-place, or the distractions of mixed company, where thou art liable to be tempted into some (however slight) deviation from thy strict duty, thou goest into thy house, there thou art undisturbed by the wishes, or the evil ways, or the bad example of others. Thou canst fix thyself entirely to do the will of God ; thou canst search into thy heart, and in the stillness of thy retirement thou canst form resolutions, and discipline thy mind, and raise thyself to nearer communion with thy God. But thou sayest, "My business is among men ; I can rarely taste the enjoyment of retirement and solitude, how can I then obey my Saviour's commands, Go unto thine house ?" Thou must form a house within thee, a place of silence and of solitude, a little desert, where prostrated before thy God thou mayest seek for His guidance, and regardless of the stir around thee, may watch over thyself, and draw thyself nearer and nearer unto thy Lord and Saviour.

I WAS glad when they said unto me : We will go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet shall stand in thy gates : O Jerusalem.
 Jerusalem is built as a city : that is at unity in itself.

For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord : to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

For there is the seat of judgment : even the seat of the house of David.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls : and plenteousness within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes : I will wish thee prosperity.

Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God : I will seek to do thee good.



Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

See then that ye walk circumspectly.—Eph. v. 15.

ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this, and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name, may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

I am always being reminded that our passage through this life is as a walk ; a something in which we pass on towards an end ; during which we may meet with strange accidents and strange company, and may be tempted to wander from the path in which we set out, but which is drawing nearer and

nearer to a close ; however and whichever way we walk, the end will come at the appointed time.

I am a stranger and pilgrim upon earth ; I am journeying towards a heavenly city ; I have here no abiding place ; let me then gird my pilgrim's dress about me, and take my staff in my hand, and steadfastly set my face towards the home where I would be.

I have "to walk" on my way ; I must bethink myself of what I shall need on the journey, for I am weak, and of myself I cannot go a step without stumbling : "*Christ will give thee light.*" O blessed voice of the Holy Spirit of our God, how can I be grateful enough for the assurance that light will be sent to guide me ! Christ Himself, Light of light, illumines my path ; He sheds His bright beams of glory across it, and that glory comes from the Book of His revealed word, there I gather the light which points out where I am to look for strength, for food, for help in my pilgrimage.

I set forward. O how weak I am ! every object on my road diverts my thoughts from my purpose ; I stumble ; I am weary and heavy laden ; nevertheless the Lord hath spread a table for me in the wilderness, He feeds me with the Bread from Heaven, and I am refreshed and strengthened ; still as I walk on, and have learned to avoid the greater obstacles on my road, I become more sensible of many small hindrances, which at first I could not see, but which now seem to surround me ; how I am to avoid them I know not ; I have a staff in my hand, the staff of prayer, with which I put aside some of these hindrances, and I daily learn to use it more, and better ; still I often stumble, I am footsore and weary ; I see the night coming on.

O gracious Saviour, hold Thou me up and I shall

be safe ; order my goings in Thy paths, grant me to walk circumspectly ; for my adversary, the devil, may catch me in an unguarded moment, and what shall I do then ?

My soul, ponder these things ; consider what are the peculiar hindrances which beset thee on thy path, (), and resolve to walk for the future more circumspectly, not only avoiding all gross sins, but every trifling imperfection, every little failing, every evil habit ; walk according to the light that is given thee by Christ Himself, follow the steps of His most holy life, and confessing that thou art a stranger and pilgrim here, desire a better country, that is, a heavenly ; then God will not be ashamed to be called thy God, for He hath prepared for thee a city.



Monday after Twentieth Sunday.

Redeeming the time.—Ephesians, v. 16.



ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

Let me consider what time really is, and how I look upon it. Am I living without thought of the lapse of days and months, and years, when each hour is of such immense importance to me ? With what sensations do I see the gathering twilight of each day ? Is it with the awful feeling that I am so much nearer to eternity ? How do I regard the return of each morning's light ? Is it with a feeling

that on this day there is a great work to be done? How do I look upon the return of the sweet spring-tide? Is it with the blessed hope that even so I shall bud out and blossom in the world beyond the grave? Do I see in the fervent summer's sun as it again and again beams upon me, a type of the True Sun of Righteousness, which will arise when time shall be no more, never to set?

Do I remember in autumn my own failing and decaying latter end? And in the still winter's day do I call to mind the stern and awful silence of the grave? I live on, letting days, and weeks, and months, and years, pass by, not perhaps absolutely without heed, but without that awful feeling of responsibility which I ought to have, when I consider that one of God's gifts is slipping, thus little heeded, through my hands. For what *is* time? It is a gift of God; next to my creation, redemption, regeneration, His best gift; for in it He graciously allows me opportunities of improving and cultivating His other gifts, His gifts of grace, of nature, and of fortune. He allows me an appointed time here, a time of probation; then will come the end, and then the awful requisition, "Give an account of thy stewardship." How hast thou employed these My gifts?

O my soul, lest thou be greeted on that awful day with the dreadful words, "Thou wicked and slothful servant," consider well how thou canst redeem the time while it is yet called to-day. Each moment is precious, and its use tells in the balance of the sanctuary either for or against thy eternal welfare. O, that each moment may be carefully employed by thee! "O that thou wouldst live each day as if the last."

Thou art told that there is a time for everything,

and thou must take especial heed that each act of devotion, each duty, each recreation, has its just and appointed portion of time ; neither giving more to those pursuits which are more agreeable to thee, nor curtailing those which are irksome. Above all, waste no time in idle and frivolous pursuits ; remember Whose thou art, and Whom thou servest ; and even in thy amusements and recreations, keep thy mind calm and recollected. The effort which this will require will redeem the time so spent from entire uselessness. Have a fixed plan for the employment of thy time ; nothing is ever well done without regularity and precision. During thy daily labour, redeem the time by lifting up thy heart frequently to the Lord ; so sanctify thy employment, and if then it should please the Lord at any time to deprive thee of the power of using thy time by illness or other calamity, those evil days will do thee no harm, because thou hast beforehand “redeemed the time.”

O Lord, help me, I beseech Thee, so to employ my time here, that by the strengthening grace of Thy blessed Spirit I may rest for ever in those happy abodes, where time being no more, I may enjoy an eternity of bliss, enlightened by the blessed presence for which my soul longs and pants.



Tuesday after Twentieth Sunday.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians, v. 20.

ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

Let me consider that whenever I have my thoughts directed towards the benefits that God has bestowed upon me, upon the marvellous way in which He has turned every event of my life, whether at the time painful or the reverse, into a blessing unto me, I cannot but lament my neglect of the duty of giving thanks. I do feel my heart occasionally lifted up in gratitude and thanks to my Almighty Father, but I fear that I do not bear in mind the injunction of the Apostle, "Always, and for all things to give thanks." Let me, in order to elevate my mind to a higher and more grateful tone, enumerate the many things for which especially I ought to give thanks.

I was called out of nothing into being, endued with life and with reason. I was nurtured and protected during my helpless infancy, guided through my tottering youth; I was educated, I am the "citizen of no mean city," and have been trained in the blessed truths of the gospel; I have received from my Heavenly Father gifts of grace, of nature, of fortune; I have been redeemed, regenerated, kept in the way of truth; I have been called to a deeper sense of God's mercies through Christ; He has often knocked

at the door of my heart, He has continued to knock ; I have been received again and again after falling away ; I have received warnings, (), chastenings, (), my greatest affliction, which was so very heavy to bear, was turned to my great benefit ; I have a continual succession of benefits poured upon me ; I have to give thanks for kind parents, good teachers, enlightened spiritual pastors, kind friends, obedient children, good servants ; for many sermons, books, discourses, many words of comfort, of rebuke, of encouragement, and many, many more things too numerous to relate, for which I ought to live in a continual state of rapt enthusiasm and praise. And yet, how coldly do I look upon them ! How entirely do I take them as matters of course !

But let me consider that should God in His wisdom have seen fit to deprive me of these blessings, what are my deserts ? If I had what would by nature be my portion, utter annihilation would be my lot ; instead of which, to save me from that just penalty, God gave His only Son to a cruel death, that I might live ! This, and this alone, should fill me with wonder, love, and praise, if nothing but misery in this world were my portion.

Let me, then, give thanks always, not merely for things pleasant, but for everything, afflictions, calamities, distresses ; all will be matters of thanksgiving, because I know that He only afflicts for our profit. Indeed, affliction will become agreeable to me, if I do but take up my cross and follow my dearest Saviour ; and I can look up to my Lord hanging on the cross, and devoutly give thanks for that His inestimable benefit, and also for permitting me to follow Him and look up to Him.

O my soul, tell over thy blessings one by one ; get into the habit of turning each event of thy life

Wednesday after Twentieth Sunday. 373

into a subject for thanksgiving; do so in faith; thou mayest not see *how* it is so, but be sure that if thou throw in the meal of thy entire resignation into the most deadly pottage, it will become wholesome to thee.

I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul shall make her boast in the Lord.

I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. *Amen.*



Wednesday after Twentieth Sunday.

*The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king,
which made a marriage for his son.*

St. Matthew, xxii. 2.



ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

Our Lord here likens the kingdom of heaven to a marriage feast, which a great king made for his son.

To this feast many are invited who refuse to come; many take no notice of the invitation, but go their ways, one to his farm, another to his traffic; many afflict and persecute the messengers sent to invite them; all these are rejected and condemned, and in

their place the poor, the blind, the lame, are gathered from the highways and hedges, and are brought in to be guests at the royal feast. But the man who presented himself without a wedding garment, is ordered to be bound hand and foot, and to be cast into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Let me consider that the Son of God came down from heaven to wed Himself to our human nature, by the mystery of His incarnation, and to each soul of man in particular, by a happy union of grace and love. This is that wedding which the great King of heaven and earth makes for His Son. The marriage feast is begun here upon earth by grace, in the souls of those who approach Christ in faith and love; and shall be perpetually continued hereafter, by the eternal enjoyment of Him in His heavenly kingdom.

To this marriage feast first the Jews were invited, and afterwards the Gentiles, and all nations are still invited to the same, by preachers and missionaries; and also by the various ways in which God calls souls to His love and service, in order to their salvation.

Let me now thank God for His infinite goodness in inviting me to His heavenly feast; when I consider what the feast is, what kind of entertainment He has prepared for me, I see myself to be utterly unworthy of so great a favour.

How dreadful is the stupidity and blindness of many, who daily slight and neglect this divine invitation; O how shocking to prefer these worldly toys, this traffic, this farm, before so divine a banquet! in which God desires to feast their souls with Himself, by communicating His sweetest blessings, and graces. during this life, and hereafter by giving

Thursday after Twentieth Sunday. 375

them to drink of the river of His pleasures, at the fountain-head of life.

My whole future happiness depends upon my coming to this marriage feast; I shall be eternally miserable if I neglect so gracious an invitation; O may I listen to God's messengers, to His word, to His providential warnings, lest I catch not the gracious sound! May I not be found making excuses! May this be far from me, O Lord! and let me be among the chosen few, who having heard their Lord's message, are found in the wedding garment, waiting for His appearing.

O my soul, take along with thee the wedding garment of divine love, with a holy resolution and determination of dedicating and consecrating what remains of thy life to God; of flying all sin; of being faithful unto death; and of labouring to advance each day in the ways of godliness. Then mayest thou hope one day to take thy place at that heavenly banquet which will be prepared for the few that are chosen, in the Jerusalem which is above.



Thursday after Twentieth Sunday.

But they made light of it.—St. Matthew, xxii. 5.



ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

They made light of what? Even of coming to

the marriage of Christ with His Church ; they made light of Christ !

O how great, wonderful and glorious is the scheme of man's redemption, and yet how many make light of it ! None, or at least none who live in obedience to God's external ordinances, openly reject the salvation offered, or the Saviour's work ; none intend to crucify Him afresh, or put Him to an open shame, but I fear many make light of Him ; and yet it seems strange that any who believe not only in the great mercies vouchsafed to us, but in the farther fact, that He Who came once as our Saviour, will return as our Judge, that as there has been an advent of mercy, so there will be an advent of justice, should acknowledge that we are perishing creatures, and yet refuse to grasp at the salvation held out to them. O how blind, how strange, to believe that there is such a thing as damnation, and not try to escape it ! and that there is a day of judgment, and not seek to make real preparation for it !

But let me consider ; do I make light of Christ ? Do I engage with such eagerness, if not in the pleasures, at least in the pursuits and business of this life, as to be unable to attend to the one thing needful ?

Can I say that I have no time, and that I must pursue the duties of my calling ? I know that I must pursue the duties of my calling from the love of God ; but if it *be* really love which animates me to my duty, I shall always find time, or make time to think of, and hold communion with, God. What better Friend than God ! what greater happiness than communion with Him ? No joy that heart can possess is equal to it.

O let me never detect myself planning and contriving time for pleasure or amusement, and then

finding out that I have no time for reading my Bible, for prayer, for meditation ! This will be really to make light of things heavenly. Let me, on the contrary, pay the most exact and scrupulous attention to the ordinances of God ; attending public worship ; frequenting the holy communion ; giving alms ; private prayer, meditation, and study of the Scriptures ; these sacred duties regularly performed with a serious and recollected spirit, will cause the love of God and of Christ our Saviour to grow and increase in my heart, and then I never can make light of Him, Whom my soul loves with the love of preference. O the joy, the independence, the freedom, we experience when God reigns supremely in the soul ! We then go forward in the path of duty, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, caring not for what this man or that may say ; even sorrow loses its sting ; if God sends death to our home, and one by one dear ones are removed from us, while tears will flow, still a voice whispers, “ the Master has need of them ; ” and the heart that makes not light of Christ, acquiesces at once in the dispensation, and says, “ Thy will be done.”

O my soul, canst thou make light of Christ ? Oh no ; He is thy all in all. Behold Him in His incarnation ; why is He incarnate but to unite thee to God ? why was He born, but to procure thy regeneration ? Christ lived sinless on earth ; why ? to bring thee to a blissful immortality. Behold Christ in His bitter agony ; through those tears repose is brought to thee. Behold Christ in His bloody sweat ; that sweat washes away thy pollutions. Behold His deep wounds ; those wounds distil the precious balsam by which thy nature is healed of its disorders. Think that His perfect obedience is thy only title to eternal happiness ; think of His full

atonement, the purchase of thy justification ; think of His cruel death, it is the spring of immortal life ; of His grave, to thee the gate of heaven ; of His resurrection, the pledge of thy glory ; His ascension, the elevation of thy nature.

He sitteth now on the right hand of the Majesty on high, interceding, and continuing to offer for thee and for all the world, His one, full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction.

Think light of Thee, O my Saviour ! Thou and Thou only, art the Way, the Truth, and the Life ; the only way of life, the only path of felicity ; the wonder of angels, the joy of all heaven ; the only refuge of poor, perishing sinners ; to Thee I flee, O cast me not entirely away.



Friday after Twentieth Sunday.

He saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment.—St. Matthew, xxii. 11.



ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

This Scripture is meant for my special instruction ; let me apply it personally, and consider what is in this life the marriage feast to which God specially invites me, and what the wedding garment which I ought to put on.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is that in which we specially seek union with Christ, and

celebrate His mystical union with His bride, the Church. The feast of which I partake in this life, is only an earnest of a more perfect banquet in heaven, when, it is written, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." If, therefore, I would be so blessed, I must frequent the earthly celebration of the divine feast, having on the wedding garment.

But in what does this garment consist? "Now, the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." This is the wedding garment. Not charity of any kind, for very often they who are partakers of an evil conscience seem to love one another; but in these there is no charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. How many good things are of no profit without this most excellent gift; the tongues of men and of angels, the gift of prophecy, the knowledge of mysteries, all faith, alms deeds, the spirit of a martyr, all are as nothing without charity. Let me, then, put on this wedding garment; I am going to approach the feast, O that I may not do dishonour to the Bridegroom, by not having the garment; and while I profess to seek it, may I not be found seeking my own things, but the things which are Jesus Christ's.

O may I make this progress; to love the Lord, and so learn to love myself rightly, that when, by loving the Lord, I shall have loved myself, I may learn securely to love my neighbour as myself.

I must also have faith with charity, a faith which worketh by love; for if I have faith without love I shall not have the wedding garment. So faith with love is the wedding garment. Let it not be a hard saying to me that love must be my all. I must love my brethren, my friends, my enemies. I must love

Him Who said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." I must approach the Lord's table not praying to be avenged of my enemies, and of those who have wronged me, but in the spirit of deepest charity and love for all ; then shall I have on the wedding garment, which when washed and made white from all its spots of earth, will be fitting apparel for the heavenly mansions.

My soul, in putting on this garment, first love God, extend thyself out to God ; and whomsoever thou canst, draw on to God. There is thine enemy, draw him to God ; there is child, wife, servant, let them all be drawn to God ; there is the stranger, let him be drawn to God ; so let charity be advanced ; so let it be nourished, that being nourished, it may be perfected ; so may thy wedding garment be fully put on, and so may the image of God, after which thou wast made, and from which thou hast fallen, be engraven anew on thee.

O ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, of Thy bountiful goodness keep us, we beseech Thee, from all things that may hurt us ; that we being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things that Thou wouldst have done ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Saturday after Twentieth Sunday.

Cast him into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.—St. Matthew, xxii. 13.

ASSIST me, O Lord, with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that this, and all my works undertaken in Thy holy Name, may be to Thy glory and the salvation of my soul, through Jesus Christ.

I approach this subject with great awe ; it is a dreadful one, and the mind naturally defers meditating upon it until a “more convenient season ;” it is, however, one of the subjects brought by Holy Scripture, through the Church, for our consideration this week, and I will not shrink from thinking upon the place of punishment which God’s great justice has appointed for sinners.

O that I and all men could really believe that there is a place of punishment, to which, if we are not under grace, we are all naturally tending, and from which we cannot be delivered, excepting by that outstretched arm, which is always ready to deliver those who repent and turn unto God.

First, let me see the man who had not on the wedding garment, bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness ; there he lies ; not a ray of light or hope to cheer him ; around, he hears nothing but wailing and gnashing of teeth ! Let me think of the bodily pains and tortures which await the inhabitants of this terrible place. It is for the things of the body that the wicked commit sin ; at the resurrection they will receive bodies, and those bodies will be vessels of wrath fitted for

destruction ! capable of enduring the everlasting burning, which will torture while it consumes them not.

But there will be other sufferings in those dreadful regions ; I know what the pangs of a guilty conscience are, the pangs of conscience are like the gnawing of an internal worm. In hell the worm never dies ! “ They lie in the hell like sheep, death gnaweth upon them.”

On earth there are many alleviations both to bodily and mental suffering ; tender friends, skilful physicians, the devout pastor, the wise spiritual guide ; all these give aid and consolation to the sufferer ; but in hell there are none to sympathize, none to relieve ; all are equally wicked, each will be tormented of the other. There will be the seduced and the seducer ; the tempter and the tempted ; those who sinned together in secret ; there the sinner will see the soul he has ruined ; what fellowship will there be there ? Nothing but misery, nothing but weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth ! There the devil and his angels will be ever going about aggravating every torment, awakening each one to a deeper sense of his misery,—shewing the glory he has lost, the eternity of his present sufferings.

Eternity ! yea, the doom of misery is final ; it is everlasting ! there is there no Saviour, no atonement. They suffer without the faintest glimmer of hope, they are despairing ; their misery is increasing, for the very torments of hell are increased by their relation to an hereafter ; their prayers are unheard ; they are bound down for ever in chains and darkness.

Gracious God ! how can I reflect on these terrible things, without making a fixed determination

to escape them ! yet it is by Thy mercy alone that I *can* escape them !

Blessed be Thou, Who hast given me a means of escape. O grant me Thy grace so to use those means, that I may not be condemned with the wicked, but may be raised to that thrice happy place, where to live with Thee is bliss ineffable, and without end.



Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.

Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.—Ephesians, vi. 10.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant ; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who, with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

The holy Apostle has just described the several duties of the several ages and conditions of men, and he here exhorts us to be strong in the performance of those duties, through the assistance of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through the mighty power exercised in the government of the world, for the purpose of defending us from our enemies, and enabling us to overcome them.

It is well to have this exhortation “to be strong,” otherwise in the constant struggle which is going on within me, between the law of my members, and the law of my mind, and the eternal conflict which

is raging externally between right and wrong ; the difficulty that there is occasionally in determining which is which, and the anxiety to keep well with men while I am obeying the law of God ; all this would be too much for me, but that I verily believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. My own strength is indeed weakness, utter, lamentable, weakness, but in the Lord I may hope to be strong ; He shall be my hope and strength, and He will ever be a very present help in trouble. How utterly useless do I feel when I have been reduced by illness to a state of extreme weakness. What do I to remedy my complaint ? I go to a physician, and beg him to give me medicine to cure me of my weakness. And when I have the medicine, I take care diligently to attend to the prescriptions ; I no longer complain of my weakness ; I use the means recommended for ridding myself of it.

Even so, my soul is weak, my will is weak, my love is weak. I go to the Great Physician, I say, "Hear me, O Lord, for I am weak, heal me, for my bones are vexed."

Our gracious Lord has given me various means of getting strengthening grace. But He is a jealous God ; He will not help me if I lean not entirely on Him ; therefore I ought to trust entirely to His help, and with my most earnest endeavours follow out His commands.

I must pray constantly and fervently ; not the common repetitions which are made to be fit for any one, but I must lay my whole soul before my God ; I must pray for His help to rid me of my sins, I must pray for His strength to stablish the thing in me which He sees good. To obtain God's gracious hearing of my prayer, Jesus Christ died on the cross. Before He laid down His life, He insti-

tuted a Sacrament, even the communion of His Blessed Body and Blood, by which the soul of the faithful receiver is strengthened and refreshed. This is the other means of obtaining what by myself I have not, without which I can do nothing.

Art thou forgetful, O my soul, of the holy and precious mysteries, which will be of so great benefit to thee, if thou partake of them in a right, that is, a faithful spirit? O no! be not ungratefully neglectful of so high a privilege, and talk not of the troubles and difficulties thou hast to encounter in this world. Go to the altar of Thy God; there kneel, and with the intensest devotion follow the prayers of the Church; mingle with them supplications for thy own especial need; take and eat the Bread, drink of the Cup of Blessing, and be sure thou hast received the Body and Blood of Christ into thee, as thy mouth has received the bread and wine. Thus strengthened and refreshed, thou wilt go cheerily to thy task again. That holy feast will have infused fresh vigour into thee, and thou wilt go forth strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, to do thy duty in thy appointed sphere.



Monday after Twenty-first Sunday.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Eph. vi. 11, 12.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who, with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

I know and feel that I stand in this world in the midst of a great warfare; I myself have been signed and enrolled a soldier in the service of the King of kings, and the struggle every day and every hour grows fiercer, as our hopes get stronger, our fears more excited; as the prize of our high calling becomes more dear to us, and the dread of offending our heavenly King grows more urgent. Without our fightings, within are fears; yea, truly, for

—“Our holy house is still beset
With leaguer of stern foes;
Wild thoughts within, bad men without,
All evil spirits round about,
Are banded in unblest device
To spoil love's earthly paradise.”

Let me, then, put on the whole armour of God, and stand, strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, a Christian warrior, very courageous to fight

the Lord's battles; I must first conquer that mighty enemy to God and His laws, my unregenerate self; I must bring all my will, appetites, passions, into entire subjection, bind them with the strong chains of love, and cast them at the Lord's feet. This battle with self will not entirely end but with life; still I must not omit to fight in the Lord's cause against the world, against the wicked men who try the faith and patience of those who are anxious to be the Lord's soldiers, by their unblest devices. But I am told that my chief battle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, that is, against evil angels, who are allowed to try and afflict God's servants for a season; against the rulers of the darkness of this world, that is against those evil spirits who are allowed by God to take advantage of the sin and ignorance and darkness of this world, until the judgment day; and against the spiritual enemies of mankind, who take up their abode in the air, that they may assault us more conveniently.

This is a great reality, then, that we have foes, enemies, against whom we have to wrestle; evil spirits, who are strong and powerful, and against whom weak mortals could have no chance. This is no poet's fiction, no dream of a disordered brain, but a fact, which I must ever bear in mind with awe; and endeavour to act upon with vigour. I must put on the whole armour of God, and wrestle; O how can I, weak and powerless as I am, wrestle and struggle against evil spirits, against devils! yet these, and not men, are my real enemies.

Meditate earnestly on this, O my soul; it will make thee cast thyself entirely on God's grace and mercy, and in the best way, for as thou seest that thou hast no power of thyself to do any-

thing as of thyself, thou wilt put thyself entirely upon God's mercy; thou wilt trust to Him, and yet thou wilt wrestle, knowing that He can give thee victory; go on, therefore, be strong and very courageous; fight the good fight; finish thy course; and finally enter into the joy of thy Lord. O God, grant that it may be so; give me strength and courage, and sure confidence in Thee!



Tuesday after Twenty-first Sunday.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God.
Ephesians, vi. 13.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

In what consists this armour of God, in which, and by which, I am to fight and to triumph against my enemies temporal and spiritual, seen and unseen? I am to stand firm, unwavering; as a soldier is encircled by a military belt, so my loins are to be girded with truth; by this I do not mean faith, but a sincere, unfeigned profession of my faith. For by sincerity in the profession of that most holy faith, the whole faculties of my mind will be invigorated, and put in constant readiness for action.

Let me, then, first study, inquire, and get a thorough knowledge of what my faith ought to be;

and afterwards so engraft it inwardly in my heart, that believing in sincerity and truth the blessed truths of the Gospel, I may be ready to give an answer to any of the hope that is in me; and may be able to stand the shock of all temptations, whenever or however I may be assaulted by them. Give me, O Lord, this spiritual girdle; O let me serve Thee in spirit and in truth all the days of my life!

The next piece of armour is the breastplate of righteousness; my heart must be shielded by faith and love, and truly what a safeguard is love, proceeding from faith unfeigned! Love is a breastplate of adamant against any assault, and when God reigns in the heart with undivided sway, I may be at perfect peace; no enemy can pierce me with his poisoned darts; no evil one can molest me; God all-powerful is with me, and I may give myself up to Him in sure trust and confidence.

O Lord, give me, I beseech Thee, Thy breastplate of righteousness; suffer no evil thought to enter my heart, but fill it with Thyself; for Thee only do I desire, my Lord and my God!

My feet must be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; which means, the virtues which are necessary for those who preach the Gospel, namely, fortitude, perseverance, self-discipline, and peaceableness; yes, indeed, these are very necessary in my warfare; for without fortitude, how could I bear the conflict with so many direful enemies, with so many awful and unseen foes? and how could I hope to overcome so formidable a host without perseverance? or enter into a conflict in which such bodily and mental labour are to be endured, without self-discipline? or how could I hope to fight under the banners of the Prince of peace, without

much endurance and peaceableness? O Lord, give me these heavenly sandals, and may I never lay them aside, to do my own will, but wear them constantly, and be always going about doing Thy business.

Over all this, I am to hold up the shield of faith; the firm belief in the doctrines and promises of the Gospel, with which I may blunt and throw aside all the fiery darts, and the most deadly temptations of the devil. Increase my faith, O Lord; evermore let it be to me a shield against the evils, the afflictions, the persecutions of the world; against the evil habits, passions, and lusts of the flesh; and against the assaults, temptations, and cunning arts, of the devil.

And now, O Lord, behold me; I stand before Thee, girt in Thine armour; O grant me that further boon, that crowning mercy, which will enable me to use the rest of the heavenly panoply to good effect; give me, gracious Lord, the helmet of salvation, in which, relying on Thy promises, I may ward off the fatal effects of all temptations, all worldly terrors and evils, so that my imagination may be clear, my judgment sound, and my conflict brought to a favourable issue; and this I ask for the sake of my only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.



Wednesday after Twenty-first Sunday.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Ephesians, vi. 18.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant ; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

If I consider what prayer is, I shall take the injunction before me as a blessed privilege, rather than a command for the performance of a duty.

Prayer is talking with God ; let me say so with reverence, but still it is so. God is in heaven, and I upon earth. I must approach Him with awe and reverence. Still, when I do pray, I speak to Him, and He hears me. In prayer, if we pray aright, the mind and the heart rise up to God. My soul addresses itself to Him, offering its humble tribute of homage, praise, adoration and thanksgiving ; exercising itself in acts of faith, hope, and love ; humbling itself for sins and error past ; telling its sad tale of woes and errors, of shortcomings and misdoings ; and all this in the immediate presence of the Most High God, Whose ears are ever open to the cry of the penitent, and Who hearkens with compassion to the supplications for grace, mercy, and salvation.

I must consider that I have put on the whole armour of God ; I am engaged in a continual warfare against sin, the flesh, and the devil ; I am surrounded with dangers on all sides, and these dangers threaten me with no less than the loss of God, and an eternity of misery ; I walk in the midst of dangers, my way is beset by robbers and murderers ; I breathe a pestilential air ; I live in the midst of a wicked world, where sin, and vice, and misery, are openly spoken of, and where bad men encourage, and lead on, and tempt the weak and the unwary to their own destruction ; I carry about with me a load of flesh which weighs down my soul and is ever tempting it astray with its passions. These are ever in communication with our great enemy the devil, and are ever ready to betray me to him. I have to fight against the legions of wicked angels, crafty and malicious spirits, who are ever watching to tempt me to my fall. And what can I do to escape these dangers and overcome these enemies ? I must pray with all earnestness and with supplication, and I must watch unto prayer ; I must be ever ready to give my prayers the wing up to the throne of grace, and God will watch over me and give me the victory.

But while I am considering this great duty and privilege of prayer, let me not forget Who purchased the privilege of letting my requests be heard before the throne of grace. The Son of God has died for me ; He has made over to me the merits of His death and passion ; He has purchased for me those graces which I pray for ; His Blood continually pleads in my behalf. Through him, then, I may come boldly unto the throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

O Thou most sweet and loving Lord, Thou know-

est my infirmities and the necessities which I endure ; in how many sins and evils I am involved ; how often I am weighed down, tempted, disturbed, and defiled by them. Unto Thee I come for remedy ; I entreat of Thee consolation and support ; I speak to Thee Who knowest all things, to Whom all my inward thoughts are open, and Who alone canst perfectly comfort and help me. Lift up my heart to Thee in heaven, and do not send me away to wander again over the earth. Purify, enlighten, raise my soul to Thee ; and grant that, praying without ceasing, I may attain unto the end of my faith and of my prayers, even the salvation of my soul.



Thursday after Twenty-first Sunday.

And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.—St. John, iv. 46.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant ; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

This nobleman was probably a person high in rank or in office ; it is not said that he was a Jew ; his son was sick of a fever ; when he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would heal his son, for he was at the point of death. This

nobleman could not have believed in Jesus, although, having heard of His miracles, he sought that something might be done for his son, for our Lord says unto him, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." This is to charge the man with lukewarmness, or coldness of faith, or even with want of faith altogether; as if he only wished to see who and what kind of a person Christ was, and what He could do for him in his emergency.

He said, "Sir, come down ere my child die." His faith was deficient, in that he thought our Lord could not heal except He were personally present. He wanted to hurry Christ along with him, and to treat Him as He would an earthly physician. And it is very possible that he may have asked in unbelief, for fathers are so carried away by their affection for their children, that they catch at any means to save them from impending death or calamity. Had he had a very strong reliance on Christ, he would have sought Him in Judea. Our blessed Lord saves his son by His word simply—"Go thy way, thy son liveth." Here is a blow to that pride which honours human wealth and power, and thinks little of that nature which is made after the image of God.

Let me here pause, and remark the difference between our Lord's treatment of this nobleman and the centurion. He would not visit the nobleman's son, but He offered to go to the centurion's servant, for in the centurion was confirmed faith and true devotion. But the nobleman's faith was still imperfect, and he thought our Lord could not heal except in the presence of the sick person; but our Lord's answer enlightened him, and the man believed the word which Jesus had spoken unto him, and went his way.

O my soul, observe in this the absolute necessity of praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. If thou hast but a half faith, a divided heart between thy God and the object of thy prayer, Jesus will say unto thee, "Go thy way." He will not permit thee to see or know whether or not He will grant thee what thou hast not asked in full faith. Thou must cast thy burthen upon Him, implicitly relying upon His power, His wisdom, His mercy ; and whether He grant thy petition or see fit to deny what thou askest, be sure of His love Who only afflicts for thy profit, and in His wrath remembers mercy.

O holy and eternal Jesus, Who didst die for me and for all mankind, abolishing our sins, reconciling us to God, adopting us unto the portion of Thy heritage, and establishing with us a covenant of faith and obedience, making our souls to rely upon spiritual strength by the supports of a holy belief, and the expectation of rare promises ; O let me for ever dwell upon the rock, leaning upon Thine arm, believing Thy word, trusting in Thy promises, waiting for Thy mercies, and doing Thy commandments, that the devil may not prevail upon me, and my own weakness may not abuse or unsettle my persuasions, nor my sins discompose my just confidence in Thee and Thy eternal mercies. Let me be always Thy servant and disciple, and die in the communion of Thy Church and all faithful people. Lord, I renounce whatever is against Thy truth, for Thou art the "way, the truth, and the life," and I know that what Thou hast declared, that is the truth of God. O my God, though I die, yet will I put my trust in Thee. In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me never be confounded. *Amen.*

Friday after Twenty-first Sunday.

And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

St. John, iv. 51.



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

The nobleman at the command of Jesus, "Go thy way," turned sorrowfully homeward. He believed in part, but his faith had not attained the fulness and perfection at which it arrived after he knew of the miracle, when, it is said, "himself believed, and his whole house." His mind was not free from misgivings, although he hoped that Christ was the all-powerful Saviour, he had heard others represent Him to be.

Let me consider the joy of a parent's heart, when he hears the words, "Thy son liveth." Christ is no longer here to work miracles, and to restore the bodily frame to life and health, after it has been death-stricken; but He hears the prayers of the faithful, believing parent, and many a recovery, little less than a miracle in the eyes of common observers, a miracle *indeed* to the faithful, has been the answer to those prayers. When we bring our little ones to the font, we take them to Christ; He heals the sin-fevered soul; and we hear Him say, "Thy son liveth."

Do I so believe in Christ, and in His power to work a change in our sinful nature? and do I go to Him with those committed to my care, in full trust and confidence in Him? If I do not, I shall not receive the gracious assurance, "Thy son liveth;" neither shall I receive consolation from on high, on the death (if it should so please God) of my little one. And yet this is a subject on which I must meditate; the death of a child is a very affecting thing, one which calls forth deep sympathy with bereaved friends, and causes the parent's heart to ache and bleed, as if its very life were ebbing away.

Why were little ones introduced into the world for so short a time, merely to weep and to die? Why were they brought into existence at all?

My soul, consider, that through the covenant of redemption, sealed from eternity with the blood of the Lamb, it was necessary that these little ones should exist in this body, and in the world, that through the death of Christ they might be heirs of glory. God, therefore, in tender mercy to these beloved little ones, has led them through the shortest portal of mortal existence and suffering, into the eternal temple and joys of heaven; He then turns round to the sorrowing parents, if they are faithful and true believers, He pours the oil of His consolations into their wounded hearts, and He whispers, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." And can a Christian parent wish his departed child to return from the true life of holiness and joy to this world of sorrow, sin and death?

God has made an everlasting covenant with His people, ordered in all things, and sure; thou mayest have lost thy child, but thou hast not lost thy God. And God has said, "Call upon Me in the day of

trouble, and I will deliver thee." In thy distress, therefore, O my soul, call upon God ; He will answer thee. The prayer of faith will lighten the burden of sorrow, and brighten the darkness of the mind, it will bring down help from heaven to thee. And in view of an eternal heaven, all earthly sufferings are light and transient, for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall hereafter be revealed.

O Lord, my Saviour, grant that when I approach Thee with humble and earnest petitions, Thou wilt hear me and answer, not according to my weakness, but according to Thy great goodness ; make me to feel sure trust in Thee, and should it please Thee to say unto me, "Thy son liveth," be thou blessed ; or should Thy wisdom see fit to deny my petition, be Thou equally blessed ; for live we or die we, we are equally Thine ; dispose of us as seemeth good unto Thee.



Saturday after Twenty-first Sunday.

And himself believed, and his whole house.

St. John iv. 53



HOLY Spirit of Grace, the free dispenser of all good gifts, visit the heart of Thy unworthy servant ; illumine my understanding, exalt my affections, and sanctify all the faculties of my soul, that this and all my doings may be acceptable to Thee, Who with the Father and the Son art one God, world without end.

The nobleman and all his household believed in Jesus after they had seen the miracle wrought by Him ; their faith was slow in coming, but we may hope that it was not the less firm and efficacious.

I cannot meditate too often upon faith, it is the very foundation of all virtues, and that meat which feeds the soul ; as St. Paul says, "The just shall live by it." Let me consider this most excellent virtue ; it is the root of all goodness.

All inclinations, desires, affections, together with all the operations of the soul, take their rise from the notices and apprehensions of the understanding ; it therefore follows, that he who governs his understanding by the false measures of the world, or by senses, interest, and self-love, is apt to fall into many practical errors ; and so he who illuminates and regulates his understanding with the lights and rules of faith, by the help of divine grace, performs such actions as are most upright, virtuous, and acceptable to God. Every well-disposed Christian has faith ; but every one has not a living faith. Many have a lively faith, but every one has not an actual faith in all their works. O that I might enliven and actuate my faith, in every action, word, thought, prayer, communion, and to say all in one word, in every time and place, as much as possible in this miserable and blind life !

There is one thing on which I desire to fix my lively faith ; it was what the nobleman failed in, when he required the actual, bodily presence of our Lord, for the healing of his son ; it is the true, inward, close, and intimate presence of the Most High God, Three in One, Invisible, Incorporeal, Incomprehensible, Who is in me, and I in Him, wheresoever I go, and in what place soever I live.

This immense God fills every place ; as in [ere-

miah He says, "I fill both heaven and earth." He penetrates and dives into every creature ; He is present at all times, and gives being and power to everything that partakes of being and power. Hence it is that I cannot so much as look, or breathe, or form one thought, if God were not most inward and present with me ; and the same is the case with all creatures both in heaven and earth.

My soul, accustom thyself to walk in the simple apprehension and pure remembrance of the presence of God, and call to mind in all thy external and internal doings, that thou art immersed in the pure essence of God, that He dwells in thee, and is Thy centre, and that of all His creatures. Thou must have simple and pure faith ; thou canst not give a shape or form to God ; faith is the evidence of things not seen, and will believe without seeing ; thou must picture thyself as always standing before Thy King, and should endeavour to perform every action and word, to have every thought guided by the purity, modesty, and reverence, virtue, and holiness, that is agreeable to the most sublime presence of thy sovereign Lord.

Thus, amid all the temptations and distractions of the world, thou must endeavour to keep thyself inwardly quiet, and ready to see Thy God standing before thee. In all thy actions keep thyself in a state fit to recall the sense of God's presence, and seek to think on Him, love Him, converse with Him, and seek, also, to lodge with all quietness under the shadow of His ample wing.

In all actions seek to walk by the rules of faith. Labour more for heaven than for earth, and God in His infinite mercy grant unto me the end of this my faith, even the salvation of my immortal soul !
Amen.

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.

Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.—Philippians, i. 6.



LORD, the Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in this my meditation, and accept my unworthy service, which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

Let me consider that I was born into this world a child of wrath, and an inheritor of Adam's curse ; one liable, nay, certain to sin, and therefore certain to die—to die eternally. A sad and hopeless state was this ; but, blessed be God, His infinite mercy has saved me from it. The precious blood of Jesus has purchased for me an entrance into the eternal city ; it has been plentifully poured out to wash me from the original corruption of my nature ; and it is the seal of my citizenship, of which water poured upon me at baptism is the sign. I was brought to the font at my baptism ; what were the solemn supplications of the priest at that time ? He beseeched God “mercifully to look upon this child ; wash him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost, that He, being delivered from Thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's Church, and that being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, he may so pass the waves of this troublesome world that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life.” And afterwards he said, “Give Thy Holy Spirit to this infant, that he may be born

II.

D D

again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ." This was the beginning of my spiritual life ; the good work was then commenced ; but as far as the infant is from the proportions, both intellectual and physical, of the full grown man, so far is the infant, just engrafted into the flock of Christ's Church, from being a perfect man in Christ Jesus. No ; the seed has been sown, the gift has been given, but the watering and the increase is to come. And I am not permitted to doubt but that it will come, if I take the means prescribed by God, and am constant in my endeavours to nourish and increase the blessed spirit within me, until the great day when Jesus Christ shall appear in glory to judge both quick and dead.

Let me, therefore, very watchfully take heed unto myself, and reverently use, the purchase of so great a price. Let me, day by day, examine whether the flesh has grown weaker, the spirit increased and strengthened ; whether I am more alive to the things of God, more devout, more loving, more recollected, more earnestly mindful of God's presence ; whether I am more earnest in my prayers ; whether I prize the means of grace more highly ; and on the other hand, whether I decline from sin, and am less anxious for the praise of men ; more given to self-denial, less fond of vain pleasures, less fond of self ; and as I decline from sin, and incline to virtue, I may hope that the good work which has been begun, will go on until it receive its crowning reward of perfection in Christ Jesus at the great day.

ALMIGHTY and ever living God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate me by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto me forgiveness of all my sins ; strengthen me, I beseech Thee, O Lord,

Monday after Twenty-second Sunday. 403

with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in me Thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness, and fill me, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear, both now and for ever. *Amen.*



Monday after Twenty-second Sunday.

*And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more
and more in knowledge and in all judgment.*

Philippians, i. 9.



LORD, Thou Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing; be with me, I beseech Thee, in my meditation; and accept my unworthy service which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

The apostle prays that love may abound yet more and more. How is love to be attained? how increased? I ought to know, that likeness is the cause of love; from whence it follows, that the more the just soul is like God, by spiritual assimilations occasioned by grace, so much the more is it loved by its Chief Good, and so much the more it loves Him; and as love creates union, so, the more constant and fervent the love is, so much the more strictly does it unite and clasp together those who love.

God is all perfection; therefore the more strictly He shall unite the soul to Himself, so much the more will He communicate to it of His perfections; and how much the more the soul cleaves to God

with purity and earnestness, so much the more perfect it shall be. How am I to attain this love, this union with God? Jesus says, "*I am the Way*;" so I must walk in imitation of Jesus Christ, perfect Man, as well as perfect God. The sacred human nature of our blessed Lord is a boundless sea of all virtue, goodness, holiness, and perfection; therein I see my pattern, my model; by copying which, I hope to attain more knowledge, more judgment.

O blessed and adorable Saviour Jesus Christ! how true it is, that the immeasurable fulness of Thy grace, is the cause of all the grace that is in every intelligent creature. Thou art the Fountain of all our gifts and benefits; and as the rays of the day originally derive their source from the bright body of the sun, so from Thy incomparable light, spring all the light, virtue, and grace, that enlighten all darkness.

But there is a virtue which must spring from love, without which that love is vain; this is a true and intimate self-knowledge. No virtue is properly a virtue, neither can it be acceptable to God unless sanctifying grace lodge in our soul. But because we must receive from God all the graces that we have, or are capable of, by means of the holy human nature of Jesus Christ; so can we possess no good thing worthy of eternal life, if it be not first begun and planted in us by our dearest Saviour Jesus Christ; hence it follows, that the more we have of virtue, grace, and perfection, so much the more ought we to acknowledge that it is not our virtue, but the mercy of our God, and the diffusion of the merits of our most excellent Saviour. We must therefore be endued with a wonderful faith, to give all glory to our dear Lord and Redeemer, appropriating and ascribing nothing to ourselves as of

Tuesday after Twenty-second Sunday. 405

ourselves, but blessing our most liberal Benefactor for everything.

O my God ! how inexpressible is that love which angels and blessed spirits shall bear to the most blessed human nature of Jesus Christ. When the happy spirits shall see themselves set down in that immense ocean of glory, that is, the unspeakable divinity of God, One in Essence, and Three in Persons ; and when they assuredly perceive themselves to enjoy that Good which comprehends all others, and which infinitely surpasses them ; then shall knowledge flow in to them as a boundless river, they shall see and judge all things aright ; then shall they know even as they are known !



Tuesday after Twenty-second Sunday.

Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.—Philippians, i. 11.



LORD, Thou Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in my meditation ; and accept my unworthy service which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

“ Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine ; no more can you except ye abide in Me ; I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit : for without Me ye can do nothing.”

Thus says our blessed Lord and Saviour. How

canst thou, O my soul, abide in Him, thy only Lord and Saviour, and be filled with the fruits of righteousness? If thou wilt truly please God, and come up to the excellency of loving Him, thou must continually and watchfully take heed to thyself, in all thy doings, words, thoughts, affections, sufferings, senses, and behaviour; by checking and mortifying thy vices and lusts as much as is possible, for the love of God; and by restraining thyself from everything thou knowest to stand in opposition to His Will. Look purely upon God, and His honour, glory, and will, in such a manner as they may move thee to do anything, rather than thy own will and satisfaction. When thou perceivest thyself to desire anything by thy own choice, or natural desire, or to seek thy own advantage, deny thyself in it; resign thy will to God, and desire only what is willed and desired by God, and agreeable to Him Who is worthy of all obedience, and rejoices exceedingly in every upright action which thou doest with a pure intention.

Before thou begin any work which thou intendest, first lift up thy inward view and fix it upon God; and if thou seest what thou purposest to do is good, because God will have it so, and because it is acceptable to Him, then, in such a case, begin it, being ready not to do it, or to give it up, if thou knewest that it would not please God. When any adversity befalls thee, take it, not from anything but the hand of God; and learn to bear it humbly and patiently, in contemplation of the pattern of that lowliness and meekness which thy meekest Saviour has set thee; desire heartily that the most acceptable will of God may be still fulfilled in thee.

But, O my soul, recollect that thou art to be filled with the righteousness which is by Christ Jesus. He has said, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and

lowly in heart." Thou must love rather to obey than command, because thou readest of Him, "that He was subject to His parents; and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Be valiant for virtue, and fear not them that kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. Prefer it to the whole world; for what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Shrink not from sufferings, seeing that he who takes not up his cross cannot be a disciple of Christ, nor yet can he follow Him; and he who does not follow Him cannot come where He is, in the excellent glory of the Father.

Wean thyself from all created things; that is, ever seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and let all other things be wholly secondary. For he that leaveth and forsaketh all things for the love of Christ, shall receive a hundred fold in this world, and life eternal in the world to come.

Strive always to advance in virtue, seeing that the man who putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of Heaven. Keep up a strict and inseparable alliance with prayer, seeing we must pray always and without ceasing. Love thy neighbours with an unfailing affection, for our Lord says, "This commandment give I unto you, Love one another." Strive to love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, if you would be perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Nay, think thyself happy when thou sufferest all manner of revilings and persecutions for righteousness' sake. Never faint nor give over thy hostilities until thou hast gained a complete victory over thyself, for the violent take the kingdom of heaven by force. Abide constant in virtue amidst all temptations and evil accidents,

for he who shall endure unto the end shall be saved. And, finally, when thou hast done all things which are commanded thee, say thou art an unprofitable servant.

Ascribe all glory to God alone, Who is thy chief good, from Whom alone descendeth every good and perfect gift.



Wednesday after Twenty-second Sunday.

Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?—St. Matthew, xviii. 21.



LORD, Thou Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing; be with me, I beseech Thee, in my meditation, and accept my unworthy service which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

Behold the zealous and ardent apostle St. Peter, coming to our blessed Lord; he is anxious to know and to do all things according to the will of his divine Master; he had some idea that the new covenant brought in a wondrous extent of mercy and forgiveness, and yet he was not acquainted with its true character of boundless love and mercy. He asked, "How often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? will seven times be enough?" It is not enough, our gracious Lord replies: "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." Does our gracious Lord mean that we may reckon up the faults of our brother until they reach seventy times seven, and then that we need forgive him no longer? Nay, but even if he sin an hundred times, forgive. Have I then taken upon

me to overpass the measure of my Lord? He fixed the limit of forgiveness in the number seventy times seven; shall I presume to overleap this limit? It is not so; I cannot go beyond. I have heard the Lord speaking in His apostles, when there is no number or limit fixed; for He says, "Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, as God in Christ hath forgiven you." Here I have the rule. If Christ hath forgiven my sins seventy times seven only, if He have pardoned me up to this point, and refused to pardon beyond it, then may I also fix this limit, and be loath to forgive beyond it. But Christ hath found thousands of sins upon sins, and hath yet forgiven all; there is therefore no trespass so great, so aggravated, so continued, which I ought not to forgive.

Let me reckon up my sins; what I do by deeds; what by the eye; what by the ears; what by thought; what in numberless ways! I must, therefore, daily knock at the door of God's mercy by prayer; daily prostrate myself and say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." What debts of mine? all, or only a part? I must answer, all; so, then, must I do with my debtor.

As a farther incitement to the forgiveness of injuries, let me remember my sins generally, my besetting sins especially,—they were no less the occasion of the death of my blessed Saviour than the traitor Judas; and yet here I live on, encompassed with mercy on every side, an object of God's great loving-kindness; how can I go from the contemplation of such forbearance, and not forgive in an instant every injury, every affront of my brother, who is an object of the same compassion and mercy, washed with the same baptismal waters, redeemed by the same precious blood?

O Thou, Who in Thy last and extremest torture, whilst suffering the rigours of Thy cruel enemies, didst pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," grant me grace to have the same sweet spirit of forgiveness, that I may walk on through this world, loving my enemies; and finally, attain to those happy mansions to which I should never reach, but that Thou canst and will turn Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my misdeeds.



Thursday after Twenty-second Sunday.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.—St. Matthew, xviii. 23.



LORD, Thou Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing; be with me, I beseech Thee, in my meditation; and accept my unworthy service which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

In this parable God is called a King, because He created and governs all things. The servants are all mankind, created for His praise, and to Whom He gave the law of nature. He takes account of them, when He would look into each man's manners, life, and deeds, that he may render to each according to that He has done. It follows, "And when He began to reckon, one was brought unto Him which owed Him ten thousand talents." Let me consider, that the King takes account of our talents when we shall all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; what an awful thought is this! He began to take account! O may I be prepared when

that dread hour shall come, when, standing before my Judge, He shall begin to take account of my life and actions; He will scrutinize my mind with the eye of His Omniscience, and by some indescribable power shall cause everything that ever I did to pass speedily before my mind. The man in the parable owes many talents, that is, he has grossly abused the powers of body and mind which were entrusted to him; for this he is justly condemned; he was "to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." See how the wickedness of an individual involves in its punishment all those nearest and dearest! if ever I could endure the thought of punishment, for my grievous offences, shall I not be checked by this thought, and for the sake of "wife and children and all that I have," endeavour to correct my sinful ways and live according to God's law?

"The servant fell down, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." Even so I must fall down before my God; I cannot stand before Him; my sin is increased over my head, my iniquity is grown up into the heavens; I cannot stand before Him Whom I have so justly offended; I must fall prostrate before Him, and in deepest humility exclaim, "Have patience with me!"

Patience! gracious Lord, what patience is Thine! from the days of my youth have I been in a great trespass unto this day. I have sinned and repented, and repented and sinned; and still I am not utterly cast out! I have been surrounded with mercies, and helps, and loving-kindnesses, and yet how often have I fallen back, and yielded to temptation, and behaved myself frowardly before the Lord! I marvel how His justice, His purity, His all-seeing ma-

jesty, can bear with me ; and yet He is still merciful, and loving, and gracious ; and He still has kept within me an ardent desire of serving Him better. Have patience with me, therefore, gracious Lord ; still have patience with me, and I will pay Thee all. Pay Thee all ; O no ! I sorrowfully confess that I cannot pay ; I have not wherewithal ; how can I ? I owe all that I *am*, all that I have ; every gift, every grace, to Him. To Him I owe my redemption, and there alone is a debt which I cannot pay ; each drop of blood, as it gushed forth from the pale, emaciated Body of the Lamb of God, was of more price, of more efficacy, than the lives of millions upon millions such as I ; and yet, that Blood was shed for me ; for me that fine was paid, and I am forgiven my whole debt. O joyful news ! most wonderful fact !

Let me never cease to thank Thee, O Christ, my Saviour, for having paid that which I owed. My debt to Thee is vast and countless ; behold me ! I have nothing to offer Thee but myself ; accept me, gracious Lord, body, soul and spirit, and keep me with Thee now and ever, that I become no more encumbered with sins, for which I have not wherewithal to pay.



Friday after Twenty-second Sunday.

Pay me that thou owest.—St. Matthew, xviii. 28.



LORD, Thou Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in my meditation ; and accept my unworthy service which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

The same servant to whom the Lord has forgiven the immense debt, "went out" from His presence, and found a fellow-servant, one who obeyed the same master, enjoyed the same privileges, was bound by the same laws, and although they had so much in common, as to be called fellow-servants, yet he to whom the debt had been forgiven, laid hands on his fellow-servant, because he owed him an hundred pence; used him roughly and unkindly, and treated him as if he had been a rogue, by taking him by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest."

Here let me consider, that the unmerciful servant had a right to the money owed him by the other, but that he pressed his rights in an unjustifiable manner.

He would be measured too by his Master in one manner, while he measured to his brethren in another. This cannot be; I must take my choice; I live in a kingdom of grace, and as I have received grace I must shew grace; as I have found love and mercy, I must shew love and mercy. If I exact to the uttermost, then I must expect to pay the very last farthing, and the measure I have meted, will be measured unto my own bosom.

In vain did his fellow-servant fall at his feet, using the same words of entreaty that he, in the agony of his distress used towards his lord, and found mercy; those words brought back no memories to his mind, he was inexorable, and threw his unfortunate fellow-servant into prison. But God is all-powerful, all-just; He watched over the poor and the oppressed, and He put into the hearts of other fellow-servants to be sorry when they saw what was done.

I may suppose that such persons as were fit to be servants of the great Lord, would have a certain hatred and abhorrence of sin; the righteous com-

plain to God, and mourn over the oppressions that are wrought on the earth, and they beg of Him to redress what is far beyond their reach and their power.

The king summons the unmerciful servant to his presence, and then rebukes him in the severest manner ; and he not only commands that he be punished, but that the punishment shall continue until the whole debt be paid.

His debt had been forgiven ; so has my debt of original sin been forgiven, even at my baptism ; so have my actual sins been forgiven by the all-prevailing intercession of Christ ; but that forgiveness may be withdrawn, if, with hatred instead of love in my heart, I turn my back against the entreaties of any fellow-servant, who begs for lenient treatment under the slight debt which he owes me.


O my soul, remember this parable, and be not hard judging of the actions of others, or unforgiving if any have offended thee ; when thou feelest aggrieved, call to mind thy piteous entreaty to thy King, the ten thousand talents, thy narrow escape, thy forgiveness ; and forgive from thy heart as thou hopest to find mercy at the dreadful day of judgment.

O Lord, make me kind and tender-hearted, compassionate and easy to be entreated ; forbearing and forgiving if I have a quarrel against any, that Thou, for Christ's sake, may forgive me.



Saturday after Twenty-second Sunday.

My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord ; neither be weary of His correction : for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth.—Proverbs, .iii. 11, 12.

 LORD, Thou Giver of all good gifts, without Whom I can do nothing ; be with me, I beseech Thee, in my meditation ; and accept my unworthy service which I offer to Thee, trusting alone in Christ Jesus.

There is something in this passage which comes home to the heart with soothing, comforting influence ; and yet it sounds sadly in the ears of the young, the gay, the light-hearted. How is this ? and why should those unacquainted with sorrow shrink with such dread from the chastening hands of the Lord ? Because they so much need that very correction, to bring them into subjection to that loving Father Whose very wrath is mercy. But when the soul has been brought nearer to its God, and has tasted and seen how good He is, then it yearns after some manifestations of His love, and it becomes uneasy in prosperity and joy, lest the Lord should have forgotten His promise.

But a soul truly desirous of union with its Maker, cannot live long without sorrow. We ourselves groan within ourselves ; we see our spiritual nakedness, our short-comings, our backslidings,—these are sorrows. But more ; the proud heart has to be subdued, and there come upon it such mortifying, such searching afflictions, that in them the chastening of

the Lord is visible ; the pride of life has to be conquered, and sickness and sorrow are sent, death visits our homes, and all our pleasant things are turned into gall. But lift up your hearts, ye mourners, and hear the words which our holy mother the Church specially intends for our edification. And thou too, my soul, take heed, and store up the precious words against the evil day. "Take therefore in good part the chastisement of the Lord." In good part, O Lord ! yea, let me embrace it as the very best that can happen to me, "for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son Whom He receiveth ; if ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as with sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?" O let me be Thy son, Thy child. I resign myself, O Lord, wholly to Thy blessed will. "But if ye be without chastisement then ye are bastards and not sons." O Lord, may I never be so cast from Thy family ; I cannot bear the thought of such desolation.

But the great, the leading argument to shew how precious the Lord's chastenings ought to be to us, is in these words : "And there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like to Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles and sicknesses. For He Himself went not up to joy but first He suffered pain ; He entered not into His glory before He was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ ; that we may rise again from death and dwell with Him in everlasting life."

Thou canst not produce any greater argument, or higher inducement, O my soul, for suffering any extremity of pain, anguish, or sorrow. To be like unto Christ ! What a high honour ! O grant, gra-

cious Saviour, that I may henceforth hail any chastisement Thou mayest lay upon me as the greatest boon, and let me take with joy any amount of bodily pain, so that I may keep always before me the image of Thy crucifixion, in which Thou sufferedst what Thou wilt never lay upon any of thy creatures, for thou enduredst the chastisement of our peace, and by the deep and bloody stripes which were inflicted upon Thee, are we healed !

O LORD, let me never forget the promises I made at my baptism ; and that as I have to appear before Thee, the righteous Judge, at the last great day, give me strength and grace so to examine myself, searching into the inmost recesses of my soul, and rooting out my most secret faults, that I may find mercy at Thy hands for Christ's sake. *Amen.*



Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.—Philippians, iii. 18.

GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness ; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church ; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

It is very necessary that in my Christian course, I should not only consider the good, to take it as
II. E E

an ensample, but, I must also meditate upon evil ; upon unholy men and unholy ways, in order to avoid them. But how to consider evil without contracting some portion of it, is a very serious thought.

In this passage of the Epistle to the Philippians, which the Church puts forward for our consideration, I may see how we must walk so as to observe the evil and escape contamination. St. Paul exhorts his brethren "to mark them that walk, so as they have us for an ensample ;" and how did this holy apostle walk ? I may take it from his own words :

"Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed :

"But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

"In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings ;

"By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned ;

"By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

"By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report : as deceivers, and yet true ;

"As unknown, and yet well known ; as dying, and, behold, we live ; as chastened, and not killed ;

"As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Corinthians, vi. 3-10.)

My soul, ponder well these words, and see the ensample set thee by the holy apostles ; and when thou hast to turn thine eyes upon the wickedness

of evil doers, in order to take warning against their sin, take example again from the apostle, who weeps over the spectacle presented by those wicked persons he here describes. See the necessity of treating sin as a matter of grief, and never take the iniquity of the world as a light matter, or a subject for scorn and laughter.

Think of the horror of being enemies to the cross of Christ ; of looking with hatred upon that which furnishes believers with all they can have of true peace in this world, or of hope for the world to come !

Think upon the end of such destruction, not utter annihilation, but never-ending, always-beginning torments in hell. Think of those, who, having no fear of God before their eyes, give themselves up to inordinate appetites, and bow to and obey them, as the God who guides their whole course ; and think that such persons, being utterly shut off from all spiritual blessings, living in the dead blank of sensual enjoyment, glory in so foul a shame, for their minds are set wholly upon earthly things.

Hast thou so acute and delicate a perception of sin, that thou canst weep with the apostle over the iniquity that is in the world ? If thou canst *not*, thou art not walking as thou hast them for an example ; but thou must entreat thy heavenly Father to give thee a purer love to Him, a clearer perception of the horror of sin, and thou canst join with the Church in her prayer, that “ those things which we ask faithfully, we may obtain effectually, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Monday after Twenty-third Sunday.

*For our conversation is in heaven ; from whence also
we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Philippians, iii. 20.



GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness ; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church ; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The apostle speaks with confidence that his conversation, and that of his fellow disciples, is in heaven. Can I be so sure that my conversation is there? I am a citizen of that blessed country, elected and chosen thereto by God's free unmerited grace ; and as a citizen, I ought not only to take an interest in it, but I should observe and do all the things commanded in its laws ; I should honour and obey its King, and have no greater delight than in intercourse with my fellow citizens, and in thinking on, and corresponding with those who have taken up their abode in that far country. To have my conversation in heaven—what an overwhelming, happy thought ! There, enthroned in glorious majesty, is One Who to look upon is like a jasper and a sardine stone, with a rainbow round about His throne, in sight like unto an emerald, and round about His throne are myriads of spiritual beings ; cherubim and seraphim, angel and archangel, a glorious company waiting to do the bidding of the King of kings and Lord of lords. But I cannot, I

must not pursue this picture, or I might overstep the bounds of reverent devotion.

The question that I ask myself is, how can I, a creature of earth, imperfect, sinful as I am, dare to suppose that I may have my conversation in so high and holy a place?

My soul, there is One Who has purchased that privilege for thee ; He sitteth at the right hand of the Father interceding for thee ; He has made it possible that thy conversation may be in heaven. Behold His hands and His feet ! pierced through and through with nails, which fixed Him to a cross, where He paid thy penalty. Behold His pierced side ! thence flowed water and blood to wash thee and cleanse thee from the stains of thy sins. He died that thou mightest live ; He was buried that thou mightest bury thy sins in His tomb ; He rose that thou mightest rise to newness of life ; He ascends to heaven to prepare a place for thee, and that thou mightest be able, in heart and mind, thither to ascend, and with Him continually dwell. Canst thou, after this view, wish to leave the company of a gracious Saviour, and again grovel on earth ? Lift up thyself, O my soul, and be not captivated with uncertain riches, but seek diligently the riches of the heavenly kingdom, and be content with such things as thou hast ; so, free and unshackled by the world, thou canst be always following the pattern of thy Saviour, and always fixed in heart and mind upon the joys of that blest place where He lives and reigns in glory, and from whence He will appear to judge the world.

And who may abide the day of His coming ? Even they who with clean hands and pure hearts have wrought out their salvation with fear and trembling, and have had their conversation in hea-

ven. But my soul, thou art afraid that thou never canst so hold converse with the great and terrible Lord God. Be not afraid; the soul being detached from the world, God deals with it much as a mother does with her child; she holds it by the hand, helps it to walk, teaches, warns, caresses it, from time to time, and is careful of it in all its wants.

Thus God, with His all-powerful hand, supports the soul, speaks to it, teaches it what to do, gives it counsel, raises it up when fallen, and often causes it to taste His sweetness in a way which experience alone can make known to us.

O Lord my God, deal thus, I beseech Thee, with me. O carry up my heart with Thee into heaven, and let its treasure be ever there with Thee, with its Saviour and its Sanctifier. *Amen.*



Tuesday after Twenty-third Sunday.

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.—Philippians, iii. 21.



GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The apostle says our "vile body," because it is now in a state of humiliation, subject to destruction,

Tuesday after Twenty-third Sunday. 423

to pain, to disease ; and is this our vile body to be made like unto Him, Who sitteth at the right hand of the Father, Who is worshipped by the angels, before Whom do stand the incorporeal powers ; to Him Who is above all rule, and power, and might ?

Well might the apostle weep for those who had fallen from this glorious hope ; well may we wish that our conversation may be in heaven, where, in incessant contemplation of the Divine perfections, we may insensibly put on the new man and become partly changed ; but it will be only in part, for "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." We may sow the seed of the new man by having our conversation in heaven, but still "it is sown in dishonour," though blessed be God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, it is raised in glory ! we have borne the image of the earthly ; but we shall bear the image of the heavenly, if heaven has been won by our earnest endeavours after a right conversation. Our ascended Lord, Who will work this great change in us, hath then this great, this stupendous power ; for it says, "According to the power whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

Rouse thyself, O my soul. Let thy conversation be in heaven ; look for and long after the appearing of thy dear Lord ; He will sift thee, and prove thee, and try thee in various ways, both body and soul in this life ; thy body will go down to the dust, earth will become earth again ; but the trumpet shall sound, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed ; then death shall be swallowed up in victory.

Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Therefore," O my soul, "be thou steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as thou knowest that thy labour is not in vain in the Lord."



Wednesday after Twenty-third Sunday.

According to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

Philippians, iii. 21.



GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

I was created in the image of God, and although that divine impress remains in me, yet I feel and know, that I am not now what that image first made the human race.

Adam was created after the image of God, and he walked a perfect man, pure, innocent and happy; he knew no desire but the will of his Maker; he sought for no happiness beyond the entire satisfaction which resulted from perfect obedience. But temptation assailed him, and he fell; and that fall, deep and low as it was, brought sin into the world, and all its woes.

Nothing could redeem mankind from the depth of sin and misery into which Adam's transgression had plunged them, but the oblation of One Whose perfect human nature would appease the divine

wrath, kindled by the desecration of that image in which He had created offending man. That One came; but no mere man could do the work He undertook; the Son of God became man; He was perfect God and He became perfect Man, and He, by giving Himself a sacrifice for sin, has obtained that man shall have the power of freeing himself from the bondage of sin and death, if he be subdued and brought under the dominion of grace by the mighty power of that gracious Redeemer, Who can change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

How completely I can see the struggle which it must cost every one to lay aside the natural man, and put on our Lord Jesus Christ! To bring into subjection, implies a struggle, a contest, a desperate affray with the deeds of the body. For let me consider the different points of my duty towards God; how imperfectly do I realise the love, the awe, the reverence, the obedience, which are due to the Great Author of my being. If I could realise them, my devotions would be no effort; my obedience would be pleasure, my love would be rapture; and yet I wander in my devotions, and obey my own sinful feelings and affections rather than God's will, I love coldly and in words, rather than in the warm devotion of my heart's best affections to its God. How much have I to subdue in temper! in worldly-mindedness! In everything about me there is something to be subdued; I must be humbled to the dust, ground down to nothing; I must trample under foot all worldly and carnal affections: Jesus must be my All, for His sake this must be effected; to Him must be dedicated every effort; and from

Him the strength to make that effort will be derived. Let me consider in how many ways I may have to be subdued; I must resign myself in the infirmities which befall me; sickness may be sent, to bring under the body, to subdue the mind; remedies must be used, but the result must be left to God; and oh! how much may be gained in sickness, by offering to God what I suffer, and by contemplating the approach of death or the return to health with calm resignation. But I may be subdued by various other trials — bad health, weak sight, defective hearing, weak and imperfect expression—in each of these particulars many have been tried, and some by them have been brought very low, to be raised by their Saviour's hands.


I may be subdued by adverse circumstances, loss of fortune, of hopes, death of relations or friends, or by affronts put upon me by others. Many have been crushed to the earth by each of these trials. O my soul, if the Lord Jesus subdue thee by any of these, happy art thou if He again raise thee for Himself above. Thou mayest be subdued by loss of some devotional feeling, dryness, want of love, doubts,—these are humiliating trials, but, my soul, bend down under them, and in humble submission to thy Saviour seek for His guidance, and He will raise thee in due time.

O my soul, fall down and kneel before the Lord, submit entirely to Him, know no will of thine own, live in humble subjection, for the Lord shall give strength unto His people, the Lord shall give to His people the blessing of peace.



Thursday after Twenty-third Sunday.

Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's.—St. Matthew, xxii. 21.

 GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness ; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church ; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Here is a direct command, spoken by the mouth of God Himself, as to our conduct to our earthly sovereign. I must not pass it by without bringing my thoughts to the test here offered, and seeing how far I am in the habit of obeying the injunction.

I am too apt to consider our sovereign as one who is so entirely out of my sphere, that she is nothing to me but a mere object of curiosity. I fear that I inquire into her every proceeding, her goings out and her comings in, with a mere view to observe how queens behave, and what they do. I do not, at least excepting on particular occasions, regard her as the Lord's anointed, set over me, in a very high and peculiar position, and invested with a dignity and authority given by God, and not to be looked at by man without reverence and respect. I may see in this particular instance my want of real active faith ; for had my eyes beheld what I really believe took place, at the coronation of our beloved sovereign, I should most probably have regarded her in a very different light. She stood on that day in the magnificent house consecrated to the honour and glory of God, by the piety of her

ancestors; surrounded by the nobles of the land and her faithful subjects; the object of the love, and the subject of the fervent prayers offered up by the noble in birth, the high in intellect, the mighty in power; there she stood, every thing that wealth and splendour could do, adding magnificence to her presence. But higher, far higher than all this worldly pomp, in that temple the eye of faith beheld the glory of God filling the house, the trains of angels shining in all the glorious light borrowed from their Master's heavenly mansions, and wafting on their smooth and even course, the prayers of the multitude to the throne of grace.

And further, we might see our Lord Himself, by the hand of His chosen servant, anointing the tender form of the delicate woman, to execute His Will on earth. The King of kings deputed His servant to encircle that beautiful head with the emblem of dominion, and the words of His blessing were pronounced in the temple, before the mixed multitude shouted, God save the Queen!

Let me think on that solemn day whenever I hear others, or begin myself to speak lightly of the sayings and doings of one so solemnly placed over me, and let me render unto God's anointed that which of right belongs to her.

But let me consider the more literal sense in which the words "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's" may be taken. I am not likely, perhaps, to be guilty of actually defrauding the Queen, in a pecuniary way; but there are other claims that she has lawfully upon me; she has a right to my respect, honour, and constant remembrance before God. Do I always remember this? Do I never speak of her or her family disrespectfully? Do I never feel unduly dissatisfied or dis-

contented with what is ordered by her authority? Do I remember her in my prayers as I should, with the remembrance that in so doing I am, in one important respect, fulfilling the fifth commandment? Do I strive to impress on others the great importance of this obligation? All who have authority under her have the same claim upon my deference, in a subordinate degree. Do I act accordingly? In a word, do I render to *all* who are in any way my superiors the respect and deference which are enjoined in the words, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's?"

O Lord, strengthen me by Thy grace to observe every jot and tittle of Thy law, and hear me when I use the prayers of the Church for the Queen and all those in authority under her.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we are taught by Thy holy Word, that the hearts of kings are in Thy rule and governance, and that thou dost dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to Thy godly wisdom: We humbly beseech Thee so to dispose and govern the heart of Victoria, Thy servant, our Queen and Governor, that, in all her thoughts, words, and works, she may ever seek Thy honour and glory, and study to preserve Thy people committed to her charge, in wealth, peace, and godliness: Grant this, O merciful Father, for Thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Friday after Twenty-third Sunday.

And unto God the things that are God's.

St. Matthew, xxii. 21.



GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godline-s; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

On the penny was the image of Cæsar, and therefore to Cæsar was it to be rendered—to God Himself must be given that on which His divine image was impressed, even man himself. Now, when God made man in His own image, He pronounced him very good; but from that state and condition man by transgression fell—the divine image was marred and blotted by sin stains, and he fell, though not entirely from the image, yet completely from the likeness of God. To restore that which was destroyed by the first Adam, the second Adam came into the world; the only begotten Son of God took upon Him our nature, and became a perfect man, and in Him human nature again had the image of God.

Now I must ask myself, if my admiration for any one, create in me a desire to imitate him, how should I set about it? I should certainly endeavour to be as much as possible with that person, study his wishes, watch his motions, listen to his words, and endeavour to catch the slightest intimation of his will; I must, in a word, give myself up to that person, in order that constant communication may

bring about an identity of thoughts and feelings, which will create the likeness to which I wish to attain.

Dost thou see, O my soul, how thou canst render unto thy God that which is His, viz. thyself, made in His image, however degraded and defiled? Thou must cast thyself before the throne of grace, saying, Behold me, Lord, I desire to be Thine, I offer myself unto Thee, unworthy as I am; I desire to reserve nothing to myself; O give me grace to perceive and know how I can best serve Thee and become entirely Thine. This is but a beginning; the dedication of self to God: what follows will be difficult, and many a time shall I have to exclaim, "the spirit, O Lord, is willing, but the flesh is weak!" How hard it is for those living on earth, to rest in constant communion with the High and Holy One; self-examination as to purity of intention, and singleness of mind, must precede prayer; and oh! how long it is before prayer becomes what it ought to be, the intense and earnest communion of the creature with its Creator! Sometimes the soul does rest absorbed in earnest contemplation of the beauty, the majesty, the glory of its Lord and Maker; but it descends to earth again, and then with sorrow it exclaims, O Lord, I am not yet wholly Thine; earth still has its part in me; I must pass through the final trial of the human race. I must walk along the valley of the shadow of death, and then, O blissful thought! although it doth not appear what we shall be, we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Hast thou this hope, O my soul? Oh if thou hast, purify thyself, even as He is pure; walk close to Him in all virtue and godliness of living, and

render most scrupulously unto Him, everything that thou hast, everything that thou art; then wilt thou become His indeed, and He will be with thee for ever.



Saturday after Twenty-third Sunday.

When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left Him, and went their way.

St. Matthew, xxii. 22.



GOD, our refuge and strength, Who art the author of all godliness; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The pharisees had endeavoured, by putting, as they thought, ensnaring questions to our blessed Lord, to entangle Him in His talk, but they were unable to do it. On the contrary, every means they employed for the purpose, only served to exhibit more clearly His wisdom and justice, so that they were themselves compelled to marvel at His answer. They marvelled; were they convinced? No; they left Him, and went their way!

How much is this the conduct of many who profess and call themselves Christians now! They profess to have difficulties and doubts on certain points of religious doctrine and practice; they have their doubts removed in various ways, perhaps in conversation, or in reading, or by sermons; they exclaim, "this is exactly what I wanted." The doubts are removed, they are pleased and satisfied

Saturday after Twenty-third Sunday. 433

for the moment, and yet they follow Christ none the more; they marvel, they leave Him, they go their way, and that way is into the busy world, where they practise none of these doctrines, of the truth of which they are fully convinced, and they imitate not the example of our Saviour Christ, Whose steps we are commanded to follow.

How often, alas, is this the case with me! I look back and see the time when my mind was wonderfully cleared on points of doctrine and duty; and yet the fruit was only a momentary admiration of the truth, or pleasure at the clearness of the explanation, or satisfaction with the preacher or speaker. There was no decided step taken, no turning my back on former habits and associates, no determined following of Christ. O my soul, this is a melancholy reflection! How often hast thou marvelled, but the fruit of thy emotion, where is it? Alas, alas! thou hast left Him, thou hast gone thy old way, the way of self-indulgence, of over-anxiety after many things, of seeking after pleasure, and of forgetfulness of the one thing needful!

O Lord, grant me a little more time, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and am no more seen; may I listen with more devout attention to Thy gracious words, and having received them into my heart, grant that they may bring forth the fruit of holiness of living to the glory of Thy name.
Amen.



Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven.

Colossians, i. 5.



LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word ; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is said in the Psalms, "They will go from strength to strength : and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion." Thus we must walk on, if we wish to attain to the hope which is laid up for us in heaven, we must rise from one degree of strength to another. I see that here is a progression, a going forward ; a mastering of difficulties, an overcoming of obstacles, and the reward is a hope of some unspeakable good, reserved for me in heaven.

I begin my Christian course in the strength given me from above—the grace of God given in baptism ; my next step is faith, thence proceeds love, from whence spring obedience and self-abnegation, a desire to be with Christ, to see Him as He is, to be like Him ; and then rises to my view the hope laid up for me in heaven. The struggles which I have to undergo in this world are very wearying ; they start up one after another, their number and strength take away all hope of finally subduing them. What makes this struggle so terrible, and yet so joyful ? The hope that is laid up for us in heaven. My faith

Begins in bare belief, but it shoots forth and becomes living and fruitful, as I see myself naked of every good thing and in need of grace to help me, as I watch the wonders and glories of animate and inanimate nature, as I see fresh instances of infinite mercy and love surrounding me on every side ; I then contemplate the power, might, majesty, and glory of the high and holy Lord God ; and I am full of love ; I desire to love Him more than I feel my weak nature capable of ; I yearn after the inconceivable glories of His eternal kingdom, and there see that the hope laid up for me in heaven is nothing less than the enjoyment of the presence of this loving Father, this beneficent Creator, this unspeakably glorious Lord God. And now, Lord, what is my hope ? Truly my hope is in Thee. O let me not be disappointed of my hope !

This hope is "laid up" for me in heaven, it is awaiting me. There are millions upon millions of angels in that blessed place, watching my progress on the path of this life. They know what the prize really is for which I am trying, and no doubt they marvel that I should ever lose sight of the object of my wishes in the surrounding scenes ; they wonder that the things of this world dim my vision of the hope laid up for me, and they see with astonishment how weak my efforts are, how tepid I am oftentimes, and how I use not all my strength in the trial before me. O short-sighted and weak mortal that I am ! how do I forget the glorious prize for which I am fighting ! I know that it is greater than can enter into the heart of man to conceive, and yet I content myself with a very rare recurrence to the recollection of the hope which is laid up for me in heaven ! I cannot conceive how I shall be capable of enjoying it,—it is no less than God Himself ! What a change

must I undergo before I can enjoy the blissful vision! I shall see Him as He is! God enthroned in glory, the brightness of His presence ineffable, the beauty inconceivable! And there, all hope together with Him is laid up as treasure in heaven! Holy souls who have been resting from their labours, dear friends, lost treasures (), all these are laid up in heaven.

O how does all my hope centre with Him in that blessed abode! O may I one day look up and lift up my head! O may my redemption draw nigh! Purify me, O Lord my God, and strengthen me so to walk on in this life, that as Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding, so Thou mayest pour into my heart such love towards Thee, that I, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that I can desire, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Monday after Twenty-fourth Sunday.

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you.—Colossians, i. 9.



LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is often a matter of some perplexity, how to pray for others; I know nothing of their special

wants, nor in what particulars they most stand in need of God's strengthening grace. This text gives an insight into the subject, on which, if I meditate aright, I cannot fail to gather some fruit. The cause for which St. Paul prayed for these Colossians was, that Epaphras had declared unto him their "love in the Spirit" O what a bond is charity! One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all; those who have these points of union are indeed brethren; they all look up to the same heavenly Father; all adore the same Saviour; all feel the communion of souls, which a participation in the efficacy of the Blood of the Crucified Jesus to the washing away of sins, must beget in the sanctified mind. With all this, and much more in common, how can I cease to pray for those who are bound in the sacred bands of Christian brotherhood. But how can I pray rightly for those whom I know not, whom I have never seen?

Let me consider of what we all must stand in need, what is our common vocation, our common want? We all are children of the same heavenly Father; I cannot, therefore, err in begging of that merciful Father, that all may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

To know the will of God, is the highest wisdom, and that divine will can be only spiritually discerned, therefore let me pray earnestly that this knowledge may be granted to me and to all the brethren in Christ Jesus; that the Holy Spirit may shine more and more powerfully in our hearts, and may make that light, which without such gracious help, would be utter and woeful darkness.

But to know the will of God, is not to do it; I must, therefore, pray that they may walk worthy of

the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work. But this requires the strengthening grace of the Holy Spirit, and I must therefore pray that they may be "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power." But oh ! how difficult, how slippery is this walking worthy of the Lord ; how, in it, do we find the weakness of our mortal nature ; how do backslidings discourage, and coldness and dryness drive to the verge of despair ! then, also, I must pray that with this strengthening grace, they may be endued with patience and long-suffering. Then must my soul be raised in thankful adoration of that beneficent Father, Who has made all meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ; Who has delivered us all from the powers of darkness, and has translated us all into the kingdom of His dear Son ; and then comes a torrent of thanksgivings and praises too deep for utterance, for the inconceivable mercies of redeeming love which has cemented this brotherhood, and purchased for me the privilege of thus approaching the throne of grace, sinner that I am ; and of offering supplications for others, I, who have such need of the intensest of prayers for myself.

O Lord, this is another of Thy great benefits to me, the permission to intercede for others. O let me not slacken in my petitions both for those who love the Lord Jesus, generally, and for those who specially need the prayers of the brethren ; let me never omit to pray, sending up such petitions as St. Paul here gives me an ensample.

Tuesday after Twenty-fourth Sunday.

And to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will.—Colossians, i. 9.



LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

To know Thy will, O my God, is all that I wish, all that I desire; Thou art my All, and if I can attain to the knowledge of the Eternal Mind which guides, governs, and supports me, I shall be truly on the road to eternal life. Grant me, O Lord, not only knowledge, but strength; not only the skill to know, but the power to do Thy will.

But how can I get this knowledge? it surely is too wonderful for me! I must pray most fervently, in the first place, for purity of intention, for a real desire to know what the will of God is in every particular; in the next place, for spiritual discernment; it is not an easy thing to see and apprehend the motions of God's will; it must be attained by study of the Holy Scriptures, whereby wisdom and knowledge are gained, and that wisdom and knowledge will enlighten the soul, when applied by the grace of God's Holy Spirit.

I must also add watchfulness to prayer and study; God's will is often shewn by outward things, and I must have a seeing eye, and a hearing ear, that

none of the indications of God's Providence may pass by unheeded.

Now, when I have proved what that good and acceptable will of God is, what is to be my course? it is not sufficient to know the will of God, I must endeavour to *do* it. First, I must begin with self, and must endeavour to present my body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; I must say, I know Thy will, I am content to do it, O my God! behold me, I am Thine; take me into Thy everlasting arms, keep me ever by Thee; dispose of me absolutely, and grant that by the contemplation of Thy perfections my will may be so entirely dissolved into Thine, that I may know no will but what Thou wilt, no desire but as Thou commandest, and that I may be wholly Thine.

To the furtherance of this end, let me ever remember the example set me by my Saviour Jesus. He said, "Father, not My will, but Thine be done." Here was the human will, "My will," entirely given up to the divine will, "Thine." Can I hope to follow this pattern? O let me strive, by earnest prayers for the strengthening spirit of grace, to attain to something of this spirit of resignation, and let me draw from the consideration of this subject, the simple rule, "pray, study, watch;" and I earnestly hope that according to the measure of faith I put to the work, so will it be done unto me.

O my soul, thou mayest consider that by endeavouring to do the will of God with all thy might, thou securest for thyself the peace of mind which good men have; thou art at peace with God, and with thyself, but thou must remember that thou must work to attain to this state; for the will of God is, even thy sanctification, and thou must mortify all thy earthly affections and desires, and

Wednesday after Twenty-fourth Sunday. 441

place them all upon God and heavenly things ; and this implies no small contention with thyself and with the things of this world ; but watch and pray, work and strive ; remember that God's will is, that thou shouldst be wholly His, and He can admit of no impurity, no worldly ways, no wandering thoughts ; He must have thy whole self, and if in gaining possession He have to wound, bruise, pierce thee, if He have to grind thee down to the ground, happy shalt thou be, if in the midst of all, thou hast the faith to exclaim, " My Father, not my will, but Thine be done ! "



Wednesday after Twenty-fourth Sunday.

Giving thanks unto the Father, Which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.—Colossians, i. 12.



LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word ; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let me consider with what intensity I ought to give thanks unto the Father, for all His mercy vouchsafed unto me. Every day do I find something amiss in myself, even my best endeavours are tainted with some imperfection, and yet my heavenly Father has regarded me as clean and as pure, through the meritorious sacrifice and continual in-

tercession of His dear Son. I am thus made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. Praise the Lord, then, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; He hath delivered me from my enemies, my great and besetting sins, for His mercy endureth for ever.

Let me now consider the inheritance which has been thus purchased for me by the Blood of my most loving Saviour; I am to partake of it along with those blessed saints, who having passed through the trials and dangers of this world, are now enjoying the fruit of their labours, in the mansions of light and bliss, which were once their hope, and are now their possession.

Prepare thyself, O my soul, for the contemplation of those glories, on which thou mayest meditate for a while, in order to strengthen thy endeavours after attaining to them, but meditate reverently that thou mayest not intrude into that which God has withheld from thee.

Look up and see a rich, delicious land, that flows with sweeter streams than milk and honey.

Look up and see a glorious city, incomparably finer than the courts of kings. Behold the blessed angels shining on their thrones; and all the holy saints triumphing with their hymns. Behold the glory wherewith the Lord hath crowned them, in the solemn day of their espousals with Himself.

But look up yet higher, O my soul, and see the sacred humanity of thy dear Redeemer, the blessed Jesus, Who died for us upon the cross, and now invites us to partake of His crown.

See and rejoice in those eternal honours, which heaven and earth pay to their King. Look once again, and humbly admire the unspeakable mystery. Love and adore the Sovereign Deity, essentially full

Thursday after Twenty-fourth Sunday. 443

of Its own blest light; full, and overflowing to all creatures, which shine as feeble beams derived from Him. When thou hast seen all this, my soul, canst thou abstain from obeying the apostle's command, to give thanks unto the Father, Who hath made thee meet for so glorious an inheritance? O turn thyself more and more from beholding with satisfaction the petty things which entertain our minds in this world; what are honour and pleasure compared to the bliss of eternal paradise? what are riches, or fair possessions, when set against the treasures of heaven?

O how glorious is this blessed inheritance, where our Lord dwells surrounded by His saints! O Lord, make me to be numbered with Thy saints, in glory everlasting! *Amen.*



Thursday after Twenty-fourth Sunday.

While He spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

St. Matthew, ix. 18.



LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Behold our blessed Lord standing surrounded by

the disciples of John ; they have been questioning Him, and receiving from His lips words such as never man spake before. He was even yet speaking, when one approached, before whom the surrounding crowd gave way ; he was a man of consequence, and as he approached the gracious Saviour, those who were nearest to Him stood apart, that he might have freer access. The ruler comes not with an air of importance and authority, all other feelings are concealed by the appearance of deep grief which weighs upon his soul. Behold the heart-stricken father fallen at the feet of that lowly Man, whom by faith he sees to be One mighty to save. He worships Him. What has he to say? Has he a sin to confess, a disease to be healed? No, he has a grief to disclose, such a grief as can hardly be surpassed. "My daughter is even now dead." She has gone, life has fled ; she was my only daughter, and I am left alone. Such was his sad tale. But, O blessed faith, blessed knowledge ! he knew that Jesus was the Saviour ; he believed Him to be God, and he made his request ; "Come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live."

Now, I do not stop to remark the faith of Jairus, it was a strong faith, though not so strong as that of the centurion, whose request simply was, "Speak the word," but it was an effectual living faith, for our Lord immediately rose and followed him. It is refreshing and comforting when all men are asking questions, and weighing arguments, and suggesting difficulties, to find one who comes to the Saviour, bringing a broken heart, and making a plain, earnest request. Some may talk about the Saviour's power, and discourse about His love, but here is one who in full confidence of His love approaches Him, and feeling certain of His power

makes his request. The request is granted. When in simplicity of faith, and singleness of purpose, we seek Jesus, He does us the high honour of following us.

O the peace and joy of the faithful soul ! What sorrow can touch those who have a Saviour to flee unto, a God in Whom they trust ? The darkness is no darkness to them, they fear no evil, for His rod and His staff comfort them. My soul, think not that thy faith will secure thee from the sorrows and calamities which are the portion of the children of men. Thou wilt have to endure much tribulation, but thou knowest how thy sorrow can be turned into joy ; and thus, to the true believer, there is no real, lasting sorrow in this world, but sorrow for sin. Thou must approach thy Saviour ; fall down, worship Him ; stop not to use choice words and fine phrases, but pour out unto Him the grief which oppresses thee ; “ my child,” or “ my parent is dead,” or “ my sin is too heavy for me to bear,” save me, Lord, I perish ; my bones are consumed, but come lay Thy hand, Thy all-powerful hand upon Thy servant, and she shall live.

Hast thou faith enough to say this ? Canst thou sufficiently realize thy Saviour's presence to put a strong will and intention to thy petition ? If thou have, thou wilt soon know that thy Saviour has risen and followed thee. He, thy pitiful, loving Master, has heard thy voice ; and when He is with thee, thou wilt have the strength, the peace, the joy imparted to thee, that His presence must ever inspire.

O my most gracious Saviour, grant that I may always betake myself to Thee in all my troubles and dangers, whensoever they beset me. Stretch forth Thy strong and powerful right hand to guide

me in dangers and tribulations; and may they always end, as did the death of Jairus's daughter, in getting Thee, my Saviour and my God, to listen to my petitions, to rise and follow me. Then shall my sorrow be blessed to me, and then shall I exclaim with the Psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been in trouble, that I might learn Thy statutes."



Friday after Twenty-fourth Sunday.

If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.

St. Matthew, ix. 21.



LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This woman had been suffering from a disease for twelve years; she was reduced to the lowest degree of strength; she could but just reach the spot where our blessed Lord was; she only wished to get near Him, for she was convinced that if she but touched the garment He wore, she should be cured.

She touched the hem of His garment, and He, feeling that virtue had gone out of Him, turned round; the woman, confused and awed by the Divine countenance, shrunk back, but He, all compassion and mercy, said, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole."

Here is an instance of bodily infirmity cured by our Lord ; He had cured leprosy, but that was a disease sent as a punishment for sin, as He said, " thy sins are forgiven thee ;" but here is no mention of sins, He calls the woman " daughter ;" He mentions her faith, and He shews that faith to have been the means of curing her of her plague.

Let me here observe the tender compassion of our Lord towards those afflicted with bodily sickness ; that He should care for the soul, though it be the height of condescension, is not so astonishing as His care for the body. If such be the case, let me consider in what ways sickness ought to be taken, in order that we may approach the Saviour and receive the gracious assistance which He always affords.

If I wish for sickness to turn into safety and life, into health and virtue, I must follow Jesus, my Saviour, even though it be difficult to thread my way among the pains and distractions, the languor and dulness, which usually throng round a sick person. Religion should be the employment of sickness, and prayer the employment of religion. I must meditate often during sickness on the possibility of death ; and of the certainty of its reaching me some time.

I must practise patience ; first, by calmly looking upon my state, then by bearing my sickness with the same thoughts, devotions, the same steady course of mind as in health.

I must also take my sickness with the spirit of a little child ; must go straight forward, being careful for nothing ; entirely trusting in my attendants. I must not murmur or complain, or pretend to choose my sickness, by supposing that any other kind I could bear better.

I must be obedient to the physician ; God has providentially placed him for my help ; I may therefore place myself in his hands, without either too great confidence or too much distrust, remembering that means succeed only so far as God pleases.

I must also practise faith ; I may not be able to use the same devotions, or to be as frequent in prayer as during health ; but by short prayers and ejaculations, and acts of faith, I may place myself in God's hands ; I may follow after my Saviour, and in full faith may touch the hem of His garment, by placing myself entirely at His disposal ; and, O gracious Saviour, in that day, whenever it may come, turn Thee unto me, and look upon me ; say those gracious words, " Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole ! "


But I cannot thus approach my Lord unless I repent me truly of my former sins. Let me search and try my ways. Let me lift up my hands unto God in the heavens. I have transgressed and rebelled : and Thou hast not pardoned ; Thou hast covered with anger and persecuted me ; Thou hast slain, Thou hast not pitied. O cover not Thyself with a cloud, but let my prayer pass through.

Thus, O my soul, do thou follow thy Lord, when thou hast an infirmity to be cured ; if thou can get close enough to Him, by patience, by repentance, by faith, thou wilt be able to touch the hem of His garment, and then He will infuse comfort into thee ; He will speak to thee as a tender Father, and He will make thee whole, if in this life, by removing thy infirmities ; if in the world to come, by cleansing thee in His precious Blood, and placing thee in His heavenly kingdom.

Saturday after Twenty-fourth Sunday.

The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.

St. Matthew, ix. 24.

 LORD, I beseech Thee, quicken me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to meditate rightly upon Thy holy word; elevate my mind to the contemplation of the divine mysteries which Thou hast vouchsafed to reveal, and bless this exercise to the good of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The infirm woman was healed during the passage of our Lord to the house of Jairus. He was attended by the ruler, and by many of His disciples, and a crowd of people followed Him.

They entered the house; there were singing-men and singing-women making loud lamentation for the dead. It was an ordinance in Israel that those who had passed from life should be so honoured, and no doubt the ruler's only daughter had as much mourning and lament made for her as the station of her father could command. He, the blessed Saviour, entered, and He sent out the noisy inmates of the room by the simple command, "Give place." He added the astounding announcement that "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth," and in their irreverent want of faith, "they laughed Him to scorn." The people were put forth; then went Jesus up to the pale and lifeless form of the maiden, and took her hand. Oh the life-giving, animating touch of that blessed Hand! it restored the maid to life, "She arose."

The death of a pure, innocent creature, is not

truly death, it is a sleep, during which the soul passes to regions more fitted for its abode than this perishing and naughty world. There is comfort here, for those who lose their treasures, "just born, baptized, and gone;" there is comfort for those whose dear ones, before the robes of their baptism have been sullied, have fallen asleep in Jesus; there is a comfort, inexplicable, unutterable, yet real, and certain, in these words, "The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth." And who would wish to awaken such blessed souls out of such a sleep? they have closed their eyes upon a sinful and wicked world, full of misery, pain, and sorrow, they will open them in the glorious kingdom of the adorable Saviour, Whose blessed Hands have been stretched out to raise them to that blissful place, where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things have passed away.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that at the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and be compassed again with my skin, and that in my flesh I shall see God; and humbly I hope, in that blissful sight to be for ever happy. This my hope is laid up in my bosom; give us then, O gracious Lord, give us when we die, eternal rest; and may Thy glorious light shine bright upon us for ever. *Amen.*



Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Jeremiah, xxiii. 5.

PREPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of our God; for He will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are prepared to meet Him.

The Church this day assumes a different tone; she has lately been holding forth examples and precepts of holiness, meekness, goodness, justice, temperance, and all things belonging to the personal holiness of her children. She this day begins to speak of a King, the righteous Branch of the root of Jesse; and my attention is therefore directed to that subject. The glad tidings of the near approach of a King, ring out more and more loudly, and I am told to prepare. The mighty God is besought to stir up the wills of His faithful people, in order that they may bring forth the fruits of good works; and then, that King Who is coming, will bring the reward with Him. This week, I am specially warned of the approach of Advent; in which season we are to "Prepare the way of the Lord." When I am told of the near approach of an event, which is to be one of great importance to me, I am seized with a sort of dread, and I begin to consider whether I am in all respects fit for the

occasion, of which I am in expectation. Can I in like manner hear the words "the days come," without feeling an awful dread of those days which are indeed coming, and may be very near at hand? I am now going to prepare for the due celebration of the events of our Lord's incarnation and birth; the seasons which are now to follow, in their course bring me very near to that blessed Lord, Who hath visited and redeemed His people, and raised up a mighty salvation for us in the house of His servant David. These considerations of themselves ought to beget in me a great carefulness, that I may be sufficiently prepared for such high and holy contemplations; but there is another consideration, which the season of Advent brings before me, on which I ought to meditate with profound reverence—the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I must endeavour to raise my thoughts and meditate on our blessed Saviour as a King, Who came into the world, first, as a lowly and poor man, but Who shall return in power and great glory to execute judgment and justice in the earth. He shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him! Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. Behold in that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruits of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. O my soul, art thou prepared to meet this King, this majestic and glorious Monarch, Who is coming to execute justice and judgment, and whose reward is with Him? Pray that thy will may be effectually stirred up to make every effort, that when He shall appear thou mayest be able to plead thy willingness to do His will, although thy power will always fall short of thy wishes.

Monday after Twenty-fifth Sunday. 453

Oh, pray that thou mayest be among that excellent and comely fruit of the earth, which will receive those blessed rewards which He has now with Him in Heaven, but which He will bring to bestow on those who plenteously bring forth the fruit of good works.



Monday after Twenty-fifth Sunday.

And a King shall reign and prosper.

Jeremiah, xxiii. 5.

STIR up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruits of good works, may of Thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let me consider that the King here named is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "For we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." I see that this dominion, given or imparted, cannot belong to the Divine Nature, because in that everything is absolute and independent; but it belongs to the human nature of our blessed Lord, and as such I am brought by the Church to the consideration of it now, that we are about especially to turn our thoughts to the facts of His Incarnation, and all the circumstances attending His coming in the Flesh.

Let me consider, that the dominion thus given to Christ in His human nature, was a direct and full power over all things; but it was not given at once, it was imparted while He was living on earth when

He came from God ; and also after His death, resurrection, and ascension, when He went to God. For to this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that He might be Lord, both of the dead and living. Because He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath also highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name ; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Seeing then that Christ our Lord has purchased this everlasting dominion over all things, let me consider how I, and all true believers are peculiarly His. We are His by right of conquest ; we were servants of his enemy the devil ; but He purchased us with His death ; while He saved us, He died for us ; and thus, this dying Victor gave us life ; upon the cross, as His triumphant chariot, He shed that precious Blood which bought us, and thereby became our Lord and King by right of redemption, both as to conquest and purchase.

Being, then, servant and subject of this King of kings, let me consider that I have bound myself by oath to serve Him. " I am to yield myself unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and my members as instruments of righteousness unto God ; that as I have yielded my members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, even so I should yield my members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Thus the same dominion is acknowledged by compact in my baptismal vows, and confirmed by covenant, and so Christ becomes our King by right of obligation.

Tuesday after Twenty-fifth Sunday. 455

I know that by being servant of a King I am absolutely His, and must act as one not his own, but another's.

I must also be obedient in all things, bringing every thought into captivity, to the obedience of Christ.

It also regulates all earthly power and authority, as all those in authority rule only under and by the King of kings, for which we look upon the King in heaven; while we consider Him as King of kings, we regulate our obedience to Him by our service to Him, and so are always ready to obey "in the Lord."

Praise thy Head, O my soul, and look up and behold the glory of thy crucified Saviour.

The gates of heaven obeyed their Lord, and the everlasting doors opened to the King of glory.

We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.

Come Thou, holy Jesus, my only Hope and sure Deliverer out of all my sorrows.

Come Thou, and here begin to reign in my heart, and fit me for the life I shall lead hereafter.

Come, dearest Lord, and prepare my soul for Thee, and then when Thou pleasest, take it to Thyself.



Tuesday after Twenty-fifth Sunday.*The Lord our righteousness.*—Jeremiah, xxiii. 6.

REPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of our God; for He will come again with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are ready to meet Him.

This is one of the titles by which we may call our Lord and blessed Saviour; it is a name which causes us both to fear and love Him, for, as our Lord, we both owe Him obedience and respect; and also may expect from Him justice and judgment, and righteousness. Our righteousnesses He also is, and it gives us the greatest reason to love Him, for without the righteousness of Christ, what would have become of us? Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. The righteousness of Christ stands between us and the-offended Majesty of the Father; He looks upon it, and listening to the intercessions of His dearly beloved Son, He accepts the righteousness of Christ instead of our righteousness, and His justice is satisfied at the same time that His mercy is exercised. Let me consider how much need I have of the righteousness of Christ, when I aim at becoming more perfect, and of attaining to the immortal joys of the Heavenly Kingdom.

When, therefore, it is the will of God to make a soul perfect, and to enrich it with graces and favours, that it may not attribute any of the grace of God

to itself, or become proud, He makes it see the vanity of the creature by shewing it, as it were, by feeling or touch, its own weakness, ignorance, and nothingness: for which purpose He places it in situations and circumstances wherein it can neither help itself nor find any one who can relieve it, but God alone; He only can supply our righteousness; He only *is* our righteousness. What a great difference is there between reading of these things, thinking of, and hearing of them, and the practical experience of them in ourselves! This is the reason why God sometimes puts us in these circumstances of increased darkness and ignorance, that we may see for ourselves that we can of ourselves do nothing as of ourselves; but Christ is our all, both wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. O my soul, thou mayest be happy in the thought that Jesus Christ thy Saviour is the Lord our righteousness; that He is that Being to Whom thou owest thy being; that Power which gives thee thy powers and faculties; that Wisdom, which infuses all thy wisdom; that Righteousness which causes thee to be righteous; that inexhaustible Ocean of Grace that enables thee to receive, and be worthy of Himself, and of enjoying Him to all eternity; and He is that Perfection Who only can make all creatures perfect; and that unlimited Glory, Who only can bless and fully satisfy to all eternity the souls that serve and love Him.

Offer thyself to Him, then, O my soul; give Him thy first and chiefest love; and beseech Him to grant that thy will may be so effectually stirred, that thou mayest bring forth the fruit of good works, so that thou mayest, when He shall come again in glory, look up, and lift up thy head, in true and certain hope that thy redemption draweth nigh.

Wednesday after Twenty-fifth Sunday.

When Jesus then lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

St. John, vi. 5.

PREPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of our God; for He will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are prepared to meet Him.

Our blessed Lord was sitting in a mountain with His disciples; they were receiving His instructions before going up to the passover, for who could "sit" in company with our dear Lord without gaining in wisdom and in holiness? He was no doubt intently occupied, for He knew not that anything was approaching until "He lifted up His eyes," and then He beheld a great company advancing. He knew that these people came from afar, and would want food; He, Who knew all things, saw the spiritual wants of the great multitude, and He also saw a want of faith in one of His disciples, for He said to Philip in order to prove Him, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" He wished to see whether Philip would rely on the miraculous power of His Divine Master, and also whether he knew that Master to be the very Bread of Life which came down from heaven,—the Life of life, without Whom, whosoever liveth is counted dead. Does our Lord ever seek to prove me, by suggesting questions to my

mind? Do I ever doubt of the efficiency of the means appointed by God, and limit His power to the effects of visible objects?

I fear I am guilty of this want of faith, especially as regards the efficacy of prayer, and the blessed sacraments, which He has ordained in His Church; I must never forget that it is God Who works, and though He sends round His supplies of grace through the hands of His appointed ministers, yet His power alone makes the food sufficient for us. How weak and ignorant am I in entertaining any doubts, for instead of a scanty quantity, there is always a large overplus; the "fragments" are so numerous that they would feed many more. Let me never forget this when I see a great company coming near to that blessed Fountain of grace, which so abundantly supplies all our needs. I am told that the end will not come until the gospel has been preached in all the world: and when I hear of so many nations still given up to heathenism and idolatry, and see the small means which are employed for converting them, I am tempted to think that the object never can be gained; I exclaim, "O Lord, how long!" but stay presumptuous! though the loaves are few in number, and the fishes are small, yet they will, by the blessing of God, be sufficient; if only we all keep by Jesus,—“sit round Him,” and receive what He sends, by the hands of those appointed by Him to convey it.

Adore, O my soul, the God that feeds us; He freely opens His bounteous Hand, and fills with His blessing every living creature; He gives even kings their daily bread, and all the world is maintained with His provisions. He feeds our understandings with the knowledge of the Truth, and

strengthens our wills with His holy Grace; He refreshes our memories with a thousand benefits, and feasts our souls with everlasting hopes.

Praise the Lord, O my soul !



Thursday after Twenty-fifth Sunday.

And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down.

St. John, vi. 11.

PREPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of our God; for He will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are prepared to meet Him.

Let me now consider the bread, of which this distributed by our blessed Lord in the miracle now before me, is a type, and which He continues to distribute to those who seek Him by faith, and draw near to receive the benefits which He gives in such abundance to His own people.

He says, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the Living Bread that came down from heaven." It is in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper that Christ vouchsafes to distribute to us this heavenly food, which I am instructed is the Body and Blood of Christ, verily

and indeed taken and received, by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

This bread, which is the true and sincere meat, doth, by the Sacrament, sanctify us; by the receiving of it, it doth enlighten us with faith, and confirmeth us with truth towards Christ. Therefore, let all those that love the Lord's passion, come unto this most wholesome bread, and let them not fear to eat of this most sweet manna as often as they can, whereby they may be able to pass through the wilderness of this world without danger of their life.

Therefore, faithful soul, come freely to this most sweet banquet of Christ Jesus, wherein is promised unto thee most assured life and salvation. If thou be unclean, come to the fountain of purity; if thou be hungry, come and feed of the bread of life, which fadeth not, and filleth the hungry with goodness. Art thou sick? this will be a sovereign remedy for thine infirmity. If thou feel thyself to be stung by the serpents of divers temptations, look upon that brazen serpent in which there was no poison, even Christ hanging on the Cross. Dost thou make thy moan that thou art blind, lame, weak, then must thou remember, that such are bidden to the supper of the great King, and are compelled to come in. But thou wilt say, "I am wavering, alas, and inconstant;" yea, but this bread doth strengthen the heart of man. Art thou sorrowful and in perplexity? this wine doth make joyful the inward man. Do many things trouble thee? cleave fast to Him Who calmed the waves of the sea, when they were troubled. Goest thou astray from thy Lord and Master? yet mayest thou walk in the strength of this meat, even to the mount of God.

BEHOLD, Lord, we believe and hope ; perfect by Thy vigorous grace, our faint endeavours.

Quicken our half dead faith into a ready assent, wherever Thou art pleased to engage Thy Word.

Which of us knows how the common bread we eat is naturally turned into our own substance ?

And shall we dispute the supernatural efficacy of this blessed Bread and Wine, offered in the Eucharist ?

Shall we submit our reason to the secrets of Nature ? and make it judge of the mysteries of Grace ?

O let us now believe what hereafter we may see, when our eyes shall be opened in the kingdom of light.

When our dark faith shall cease into vision, and our hope expire into full enjoyment.

When all our affections shall be contracted into love, and love shall be extended to all eternity.



Friday after Twenty-fifth Sunday.

This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.—St. John, vi. 14.

REPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of our God ; for He will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are prepared to meet Him.

The people of Israel were at this time looking out eagerly and earnestly for the promised Messias,

Who was to deliver them from their dependent state, and raise Himself and them to high importance. It is very necessary to bear this in mind as I read the gospels ; it shews how men can blind themselves, even when the truth is before their eyes, if their hearts are not right before God.

They knew that a prophet was to come ; this is He of Whom Jacob spoke, when he said : " The sceptre shall not pass from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Again, Moses said : " The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thy brethren, like unto me." Even the family out of which this Prophet was to arise was named : " And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Also, that He was not to come empty-handed, that the people might lack neither inducement to follow Him, nor sign of His truth : " Say ye to the daughter of Sion, Behold thy Salvation cometh ; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him."

The time of the appearance of this often-promised Prophet is also precisely pointed out by the prophet Daniel : " Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks :—and after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off."

Thus, and in many more instances, was the Saviour, the Great Prophet foretold,—time, place, family, bodily form, and outward circumstances were described, and we are not left to conjecture whether or not their fulfilment was recognized ; they were so, and in this case, the men affirmed with an oath, that " this is that Prophet that should

come into the world." How this knowledge must have turned to their more certain destruction, when they crucified the Lord of life and put Him to an open shame, I shall not now consider. Let me rather meditate upon the instruction that I must gather from their example. I have far higher and more indubitable proofs, that this was that Prophet that should come into the world; and I have, moreover, the belief that He will come again in glory to judge both the quick and the dead.

I am told that "He will come in a day and an hour when we look not for Him;" "as a thief in the night;" and I am commanded "to watch." I am also warned that "false Christs and false Prophets will arise, and deceive many."

Watch, therefore, O my soul, and be ever wakeful to ward off all the attacks of Satan, who at this time is peculiarly vigilant to take thee unawares. Be not deceived, follow thy Saviour; feed on that heavenly Bread which He distributes by the hands of His disciples; and when thou art brought to the confession that "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come," let it not be a thoughtless, unfruitful belief, but let it bring forth the fruit of unbounded love and great watchfulness, and an untiring zeal for His Name, Whose blessing, when He comes, will rest upon those servants whom He finds watching.



Saturday after Twenty-fifth Sunday.

And they shall dwell in their own land.

Jeremiah, xxiii. 8.

DREPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of our God; for He will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are prepared to meet Him.

This is a promise on which I may feed my hope, if I have sincerely tried to keep all the statutes of the Lord my God. For twenty-five weeks has the Lord my good and gracious God, led me through the teaching of the Church, to the consideration of different points of self-discipline, and to the meditation on the practice of the many Christian virtues, so as both to bring forth the fruit of my last Advent, Lent, Easter, and Whitsuntide, and to prepare me for those which are coming. How poorly and weakly I have carried out these intentions, I have sincerely to deplore. The constant need of a strict guard over every avenue of my senses has been strongly felt; and also the infirmity of my will, the want of determination in carrying out the will, has been sensibly forced upon me. But, thanks be to God, He has afforded grace, and strength; and the blessed knowledge that I have a Saviour to Whom I may fly in time of need, has been an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast. I have now ended this Trinity season of (): let me consider that as it is ended, so are all things about to end; and let me put this solemn question to my-

II.

II H

self, Why came I here? What is my business in this mortal life? For what end has God made me? Upon what errand has He sent me hither? I cannot plead ignorance to any of these questions. I was made for God; and my business here is to know Him, love Him, serve Him here, so as to come to enjoy Him hereafter, in a happy eternity. O how noble, how glorious, how blessed is this end for which I was made! and how good is God, Who has prepared such good things for me.

I have, properly speaking, but one concern in this life—to love and serve my Maker; this is the “one thing needful.” If I apply myself diligently and in earnest to this great business, all is well; if I neglect it, all will be lost. What will it avail a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Let everything, therefore, be brought under, and be subordinate to this; vanity of vanities, all is vanity besides loving God, and serving Him alone.

Let me consider the great misery and blindness of those, who live in a continual neglect and forgetfulness of this their only business, whose pursuits are after mere vanities, who weary themselves in running after honours, riches, and pleasures, which they will one day find all hollowness and corruption, and for these forfeit God and eternity. And has not this been too much thy case, O my soul! O be confounded at the thought of thy having been so strangely senseless, so very wretched; detest thy past errors, and resolve to mind thy true and only business, and to return to God, with thy whole heart.

Since God is both thy first beginning and thy last end; since thou art made by Him, and for Him, and all thy powers, senses and faculties are designed to bring thee to Him, resolve to employ

them henceforth in serving and glorifying Him ; thus only shalt thou find true comfort here ; and shalt hereafter be permitted to dwell in that blest Land, where with angels and archangels, and all the company of Heaven, thou shalt laud and magnify His glorious Name, evermore praising Him and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Heaven and earth are filled with the Majesty of Thy Glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High! *Amen.*



St. Matthew.

Follow Me. And he arose, and followed Him.

St. Matthew, ix. 9.



MALMIGHTY God, who by Thy blessed Son didst call Matthew from the receipt of custom to be an Apostle and Evangelist ; grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires, and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the same Thy Son Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Matthew the publican was busy at his office. Jesus passing by called unto him ; what was there in that call which drew after it such prompt obedience ? There was no outward authority given to the lowly Man, Who seemed to be only passing that way by accident, and yet the call was obeyed without a question, without a murmur ; he left *all*, riches, comforts, all that he before possessed, and followed the meek, the lowly, the humble

Jesus. What an example is here! what wonders of divine grace does the conversion of St. Matthew exhibit. He turned from being a mere money-getting, worldly man, a publican, and a sinner, to be a follower and disciple of Christ, a pillar of the Church, a preacher of the word, a worker of miracles, an evangelist.

Glorify God, O my soul, Who has wrought these wonders, and has shewn such tokens of His mercy, love and power; and learn never to despair of the conversion of any one, however far he may now apparently be from the blessed change. Behold, the arm of the Lord is not shortened; He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and He is as willing now to receive the penitent sinner, as when Matthew turned his back for ever upon the custom-house. But alas! we are not so ready to attend to the heavenly calls; we sit at the receipt of custom, so intently fixed upon our work that we see not the Saviour passing by; His meek eye, His low and gentle voice, touch not the world-hardened soul.

Follow thou Me. Yea, dear Lord, I would follow Thee, but, O this hard heart, I cannot keep it from still dwelling upon worldly pursuits; I would follow close to Thee, and imitate Thy steps, but I find it hard to keep close to the Holy Guide, Who must have my whole undivided heart. Give me Thy grace, O Lord and Saviour, that I may daily have more strength and courage to throw off all love of the world and worldly things, and to follow Thee more and more nearly.

St. Matthew, immediately upon his conversion, made a feast for our Lord in his house, and to it invited many publicans and sinners. I here see the great privileges accorded to those who follow their Lord; they can bring their friends and acquaint-

tances into intercourse with their Saviour. They may bring their dear ones into His presence, and they may together feast upon the divine charity of our gracious Redeemer, Who would that all men should be saved.

But thou, O my soul, if thou follow thy Lord, must also entertain Him with what thou hast of the best; He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me." Thou must entertain Christ by inviting Him into thy inner house, and keeping thyself at home with Him, by recollection and earnest prayer and meditation. Thou canst feast Him by giving Him thy heart; by love, and by frequent and fervent devotion of all thy powers to Him. In return, He feasts thee, by giving thee Himself. O gracious Saviour, how sweet art Thou to those who truly follow Thee, and are led by Thee! O grant me to be ever with Thee, and to enjoy Thee to all eternity!

O GOD, Whose powerful call drew Matthew the publican from the receipt of custom to become an eminent apostle and evangelist in Thy Church; grant us, we beseech Thee, in celebrating the blessed memory of his life and death, worthy his high and extraordinary vocation, to advance Thy praise, for so glorious an example of Thy grace; and that complying readily and faithfully with it, we may in like manner forsake all to follow Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

St. Michael and all Angels.*This is God's Host.*—Genesis, xxxii. 2.

GOD, Who on this day callest us by Thy Church, to commemorate all the glorious Host of Heaven, who by Thy appointment assist Thy elect against the powers of darkness, give Thy Angels charge over me to keep me in all my ways, and especially in this my meditation, that it may be to my profit and Thy glory, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is a subject which I approach with awe; every look into the unseen world, peopled as it is with millions upon millions of spiritual beings, fills me with an undefined dread. I am speaking of that which has been beheld by few mortal eyes; and yet enough has been seen to add the evidence of the senses to the direct revelation of Scripture. It were infidelity to disbelieve that God's host are encamped in bright myriads in the heavenly country, always in readiness to do their Master's biddings. Let me entertain the idea that we each have our guardian angel—a being without sin, whose only wish is the will of his Heavenly Lord, and who watches with anxious care all our doings. I may also believe that these heavenly guardians differ in privileges and rank, according to the purity of the mortal over whom they guard. The angels of little children, those flowers fresh from Paradise, do always behold the face of the Heavenly Father. O how holy, how pure shouldst thou be, O my soul, when thou knowest that a servant of the Most High God always attends thee; he has, no doubt,

kept thee from many falls, from many misfortunes; he rejoices over thy improvement, he weeps over thy many errors.

When I remember that these heavenly beings are always the executors of God's commands, how much shall I reverence them, how careful to bear myself as one who, created by God only a little lower than the angels, is striving to keep the position assigned him by His heavenly Father, and to rise as near to the perfections of those bright creatures as in this dim world we are enabled to do. Angels seem to be spoken of more in connexion with little children than with any other state of mortal existence; why is this, but that in their unspotted innocence and purity, their confiding love, their unquestioning faith, they approach nearer to the nature of the heavenly messengers. Angels stand prepared to do their Master's bidding; and when the word goes forth, they fly to the utmost parts of the earth. O what a privilege, to be sent on such a Master's service. How can I in my sphere do anything in such a service? I must cultivate the spirit of a little child; I must be pure, and trusting, and not anxious; but solely occupied in the love and adoration of that pure holy Being, Whom to serve must be my only aim, my sole delight. Then with what holy rapture shall I join in the hymn of the Church, when with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify the glorious Name, evermore praising Him, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, Lord most High.

Thus, O my soul, must thou regard thyself as surrounded by the angelic spirits who watch thy motions with all the jealousy of pure devotion to their Master's service. Dost thou believe? Take

it not as a pleasing idea, fit to amuse the fancy ; but make it a steady, firm belief, to raise and purify, and chasten thy every feeling. The head of the woman is to be covered because of the angels ; even so do thou, remembering their presence, keep thyself in all modesty, in purity, gravity, and piety ; and be sure that in all thy worldly troubles and fleshly conflicts, thou wilt have the assistance of thy good angel, if thou only beseech thy Heavenly Father to guide thee aright.

Great is the Majesty of the King we serve ; thousands of saints attend at His presence, and millions of angels wait on His throne, all beautifully ranged in perfect order ; all joyfully singing the praises of their Creator. Let us bow down low our heads to Him, before Whom the seraphim cover their faces ; let us bow down our faces to Him, at Whose feet the saints lay down their crowns.

O praise the Lord, all ye powers of my soul ; praise the immortal King of saints and angels ; praise Him, the Author of all their graces ; praise Him, the Finisher of all their glories ; praise Him in the hosts of angels whom He sets about us as the guard of our lives, that they may keep us safely in all our ways, and carry us at last to their own home. Praise Him ye angels ; and magnify Him with us, all ye stars of the morning.



St. Luke the Evangelist.

*The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few :
pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He
would send forth labourers into His harvest.*

St. Luke, x. 2.



THOU, Who didst inspire the pen of the Evangelist St. Luke to write a faithful record of our most blessed Saviour; grant me the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit, that in performing this my meditation, and in all other acts of my life, I may truly serve Thee, and edify my own soul.

Some persons are called to forsake their previous occupation in order to follow their Lord; others are ordained to serve the Lord in their worldly vocation. Thus it might have been with St. Luke; for he is named by St. Paul as the "beloved physician," as if he yet exercised that profession.

What a high destiny is that of this Evangelist. He was the chosen friend and follower of the great apostle, and the constant companion of all his travels. Born in Antioch, and one of the seventy disciples, he became afterwards the friend of St. Paul, with whom he performed many of his journeys. After the death of St. Paul, he continued to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and attained the honour and crown of martyrdom.

Let me remember that St. Luke's great distinction, was the work of an Evangelist committed to him. He specially shews forth the Atonement in his gospel, and the character of our Lord, both as Priest and Victim, is what he mainly sets forth.

In St. Luke's gospel we see the priestly history

of Zacharias and his priestly child ; we have the three hymns of the Church, and in it alone the account of the circumcision, purification, and presentation ; and the account of our blessed Lord's early youth.

The man to whom such a holy history was confided, could have been no common man, and yet he had worked at a secular calling, and sanctified it by his faithfulness, perseverance, constancy, and zeal, in the cause of the gospel.

This is an encouragement to thee, O my soul, when thou art tempted to think that God's cause cannot be served, and holiness cannot be attained except in a life devoted to the direct worship and exclusive service of God. But Luke was a physician, beloved of St. Paul ; and yet we read that his praise was in all the Churches. Take courage, therefore, and pursue the way of holiness, bound as thou art, to a secular calling ; preach the gospel by the purity of thy life, the honesty of thy mind, the sobriety of thy demeanour ; shew forth thy Lord's atonement by thy self-denials, thy putting aside all belonging to self, and by suffering all the crosses of this life as becomes a servant of the Lord Jesus, the holy way of Whose blessed cross thou art sworn to follow.

Then, though perhaps thou wilt be held in little esteem by the world, thou wilt have a treasure of praise laid up for thee in the Church which is above, where, in company with St. Luke and all other martyrs and saints, the Lord Jesus reigns triumphant, world without end.

ALMIGHTY God, Who calledst Luke the physician, whose praise is in the gospel, to be an Evangelist, and Physician to the soul ; may it please

Thee, that by the wholesome medicines of the doctrine delivered by him, all the diseases of our souls may be healed ; through the merits of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



St. Simon and St. Jude.

These things I command you, that you love one another.—St. John, xv. 17.



GOD, Who by a glorious martyrdom called the blessed apostles Simon and Jude from their eminent labours in Thy vineyard, to blissful rest in Thy kingdom ; Grant me Thy grace to improve this opportunity of celebrating their memories, both by praising Thee for such excellent instructors, and pressing more lively on myself their saving doctrine and examples, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

The saints we commemorate this day were brothers ; they held the same blessed faith ; they laboured together at the same high calling ; and after preaching the gospel in Persia, and obtaining many converts, they suffered martyrdom together. One in faith, in labour, in life, and in martyrdom, they still continue undivided, as the Church unites their memories in one festival, and points out to her children the necessity and beauty of unity, as shewn forth in the lives of Simon and Jude.

The union of these saints first began in relationship ; they were brothers. They became united in the still closer bonds of Christian friendship, and herein they preach to us even now, and exemplify

the meaning of our blessed Lord's often-repeated exhortation to "love one another." This true Christian friendship begins in a common object of love and adoration—God the blessed Trinity, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. There is a common need of a Saviour; and a sympathetic gratitude for His acts of love and mercy, begets in them a desire to perform together some deeds of self-sacrifice and devotion to shew that love. They work together at the common object—that of shewing forth the glory of God; and in their deaths they are not divided; for if one goes from sight before the other, still they walk hand in hand; both hearts are with their Saviour, and in a few short years the union will be complete; the heavenly building will be finished; and in the presence of their Lord the end of all their labours will be attained.

This union between the individual members of the Church, is the beginning and foreshadowing of that unity of the Church itself, which is so particularly the object of the Church's prayers to-day. The church is compared to a building, the chief corner stone whereof, in which consists its strength, is the Lord Jesus Himself. To this first and chiefest stone are added other stones, apostles and prophets, who are the solid foundation on which the whole fabric rests in security. To this building are added all those who pass out of the Church militant on earth, so prepared and hewn, and brought into shape, that they are fit to be added to the heavenly building.

I know what discipline, and sorrows, and trials are often necessary to make souls fit for their heavenly destiny; for each must be a holy temple in itself, before it can be acceptable to the great Mas-

ter Builder ; and I know that one of the means pointed out by His great mercy to attain such holiness, is, Christian union, the perfect sympathy of true Christian hearts, in loving each other, and in adoring their gracious Master.

Thus, O my soul, thou hast to aim at Christian union, and Christian unity ; each one is to love the other, and all are to love and adore the great and good God Who bestows such plentiful means and opportunities of serving Him, and of growing in grace, by the instructions and means He has afforded us, and by the examples of all the blessed saints and martyrs, who have now passed into the Church triumphant.

O ALMIGHTY God, Who hast built Thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone ; grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



All Saints Day.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.—Revelations, vii. 9.



APPROACH, my soul, and for a time cast aside all worldly thoughts and cares, and occupy thyself in the contemplation of the glorious company which the Church honours in her

services to-day. The flesh and all its imperfections throws a veil over thy sight ; thou canst only behold as in a glass darkly ; but entreat thy Lord so to bless this meditation to thee, that it may bring forth the fruit of more earnest endeavours after strength and grace ; more deadness to the world ; more elevation towards heaven and heavenly things.

Behold a throne and One thereon, too great, too bright, for thee to look upon !

Behold the Lamb of God, He it is to Whom thou must look ; He is the Head of the Church, even the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ; in Him we live and move and have our being. He is surrounded by multitudes which no man can number ; these are saints, who, having lived amid the crooked generations of men, and having struggled with the miseries of the world, have now eternal fellowship with God the blessed Trinity ; they have become habitations fit for the presence of God, by their faith, their purity, their holy conversation in the world ; they have had external fellowship with all the members of the Church, in the Word and Sacraments, besides the intimate union and conjunction which they enjoy with all saints of earth ; and now they are passed to their reward. For the Lamb Which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Thou must, on this solemn day, recapitulate all the lessons which the Church has taught thee throughout the year in the lives of the saints. There is the meekness of her who was blessed among women, Mary, the Mother of the Lord. The obedience of St. Andrew. The confirmation of the faith in St. Thomas. The charity of St. Stephen.

The love of St. John. The purity of the Holy Innocents. The laborious zeal and undaunted courage of St. Paul. The faith of St. Matthias. The true teaching of St. Mark. The steadfastness of St. Philip and St. James. The devotedness of St. Barnabas. The boldness of St. John Baptist. The zeal and humility of St. Peter. The self-denial of St. James. The gentleness and lowliness of St. Bartholomew. The unworldliness of St. Matthew. The glorious order of the bright host of heaven. The diligence of St. Luke. The Christian union of St. Simon and St. Jude.

Thou mayest also think upon all the just men made perfect, who have passed from the Church on earth.

O think of their lives of holiness and devotion, of their prayers and tears; think of the blessed little ones called to the bosom of their God before a soil had passed upon their baptismal robes; think of the struggles, the pains, the sore afflictions, which have prepared many a meek and lowly one, who has dropped silently into an humble grave, to take a place amid that great multitude, now beholding the Lamb, and worshipping before the throne for ever.

Thou art lost and overwhelmed, O my soul, in thinking of these things. The remembrance of many a loved form flits before thee, over whose virtues and loveliness thou wouldst shed tears of bitter regret, didst thou not feel that such purity and holiness have found a place amid the army of happy saints; and in joining in the services of this day thou feelest that they are still with thee; they are nearer to their blessed Lord; for thou art without the veil, and they surround the throne; but prayers and thanksgiving, often mingled when side by side on earth, are still offered; one is above—thou art below.

The earth, the world, and all its gay and perishing scenes, are flat and dull. O can I return to such vain pursuits again? Can I leave this happy country? Yea, O my soul; go cheerly to thy work again; a few brief years, however toilsome, however dreary, will bring thee to the end. And, O blessed Saviour! grant unto me Thy most unworthy servant, such perseverance, such grace, and such zeal in Thy service, that when thou shalt see fit to end my days on earth, I may be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting.

THE END.

101 065974535

